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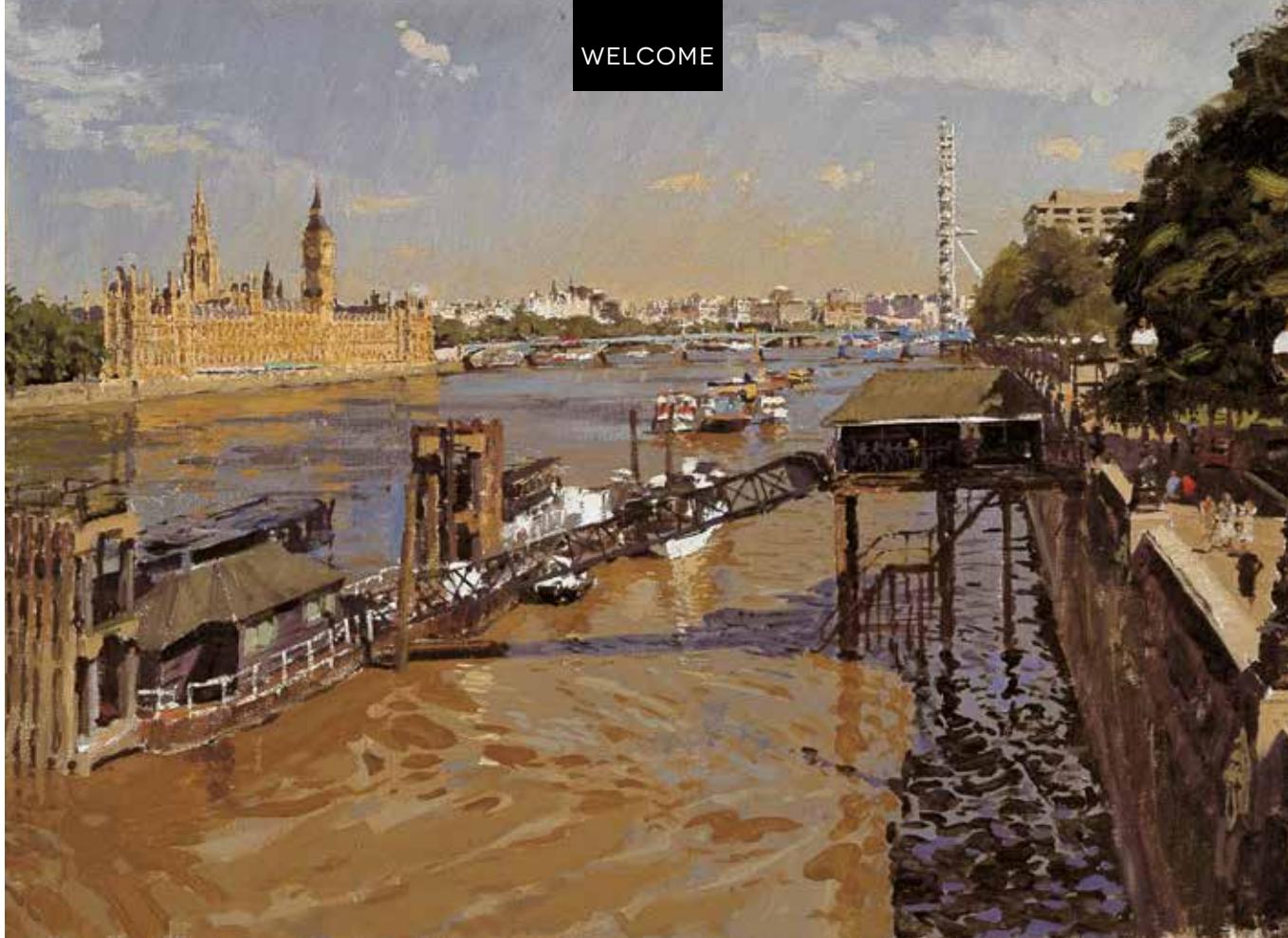


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# MAKE THE NEW YEAR A TIME FOR CREATIVITY



With the new year upon us, it is a useful time to think about how to make the next step with your art. As well as the usual mix of practical painting advice and demonstrations this month, we've also spoken to several artists who are finding new and creative ways to develop their practice and find a new audience for their work, from seasoned landscape painter Peter Brown using crowdfunding to get his latest project off the ground, to the 'daily painters' who improved their skills and sales by getting into good habits. I hope you find their stories inspiring.

I'd also like to say a huge thank you to all the artists involved in the recent *ING Discerning Eye* exhibition. As a selector, I was hugely honoured to choose from such stunning works and especially proud to see two artists from my corner (Andrew Gifford and Tom Hughes) take home two of the top three prizes. I also want to say goodbye and good luck to our wonderful assistant editor Terri Eaton who is moving on to a new job. She'll be sorely missed in the office, but hopefully still making regular contributions to the magazine every month.

Steve Pill, Editor

## Make your mark!

Inspired by Peter Brown's work, we want to see your paintings of iconic buildings and scenes. Share your images via email or social media and we'll print the best ones in our next issue...

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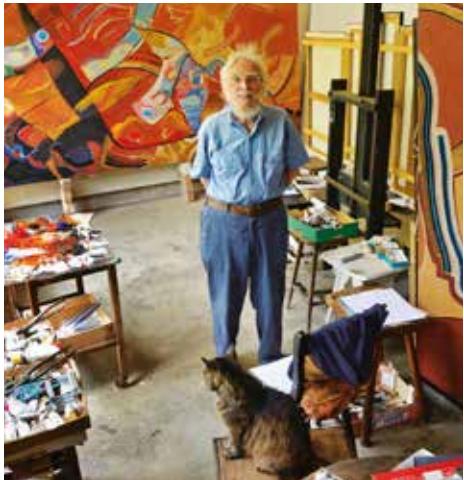
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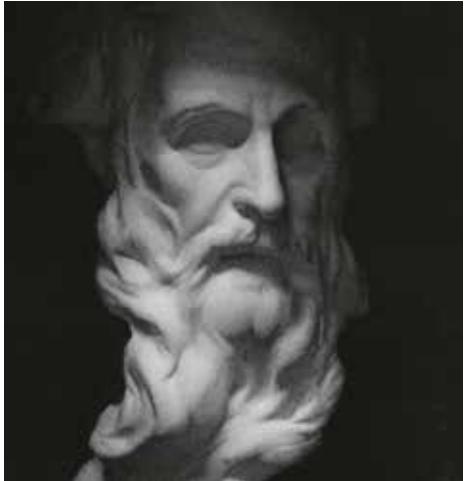
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# YOUR LETTERS...

## LETTER OF THE MONTH

### A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

It's always a delight to receive *Artists & Illustrators* magazine through the letterbox every month thanks to my brother – a subscription was his year-long-lasting birthday present to me, a great gift.

November's edition has such a wonderful juxtaposition of articles. The impressionistic and colourful work of Glen Preece, the complex art of David Jones, Thomas Fluharty's brilliant exaggerated portrait caricatures, the inspiring abstracts of Kevin Scully and the wonderfully loose bird paintings by Esther Tyson all contrast with the oh-so-serious and yet oh-so-necessary (but dare I say oh-so-boring) subject of perspective.

The article on Escher took me back 40 years or so to when I first came across this master artist. This single short article demonstrates Escher's absolute mastery of perspective and illustration, but also his ability to throw convention out of the window to produce challenging, 'impossible' images. Keep up the good work – I'm already looking forward to next month's edition.

David Vickers, Kilmington, Axminster

### A MUG'S GAME

#### Re: Painting with Coffee, Issue 359

I was introduced to Stephen Rew's technique about 15 years ago when I first took up painting. I was absolutely daunted by the sheet of A2 paper I was given by the tutor, having previously worked on nothing larger than A5. We were painting in a local nature reserve packed with trees. I sat there wondering how to start such a complicated scene.

I watched with horror as the tutor threw a cup of coffee onto the paper. It trickled down in a brown glistening cascade. "Move it around," he said. I did and amazing tree trunks started to emerge.

I found I could tease branches out while it was still wet. I created a masterpiece. I was so pleased with the end result. Friends admired it on my wall. Then, after a few months, it all went mouldy.

Chris Ruskin, via email

### ACCESS DENIED

#### Re: Your Letters, Issue 359

I was interested to read the letter from Ian Hart. I have also become an amateur artist through permanent disability, although it was something I had always wanted

to do. I am fortunate to live on the outskirts of Manchester where there are a good number of quality art shops. However, I need to use a wheelchair and cannot access many of them as there is no access to upper or lower floors, or the aisles are too narrow. I find myself having to use Hobbycraft, but would prefer to access the wider range and specialist knowledge available in traditional art shops.

The problem is not limited to Manchester. Whenever I find an art shop on my travels, I generally have to gaze wistfully at the fascinating window display but can't go inside. Of course, there is the Internet but that is of little use when needing to choose some products that need to be seen, touched or compared to find exactly the right one.

Art is a wonderful activity that can be enjoyed by anyone and it is particularly therapeutic for those of us unable to live a more active life. Perhaps someone could compile an access-for-all list of art shops or maybe more art shops could consider making their buildings wheelchair friendly? I would be first in the queue!

Hazel Whitehead, via email

## write to us

Send your letter or email to the addresses below:

#### POST:

Your Letters  
*Artists & Illustrators*  
The Chelsea Magazine  
Company Ltd.  
Jubilee House  
2 Jubilee Place  
London SW3 3TQ

#### EMAIL:

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andillustrators.co.uk

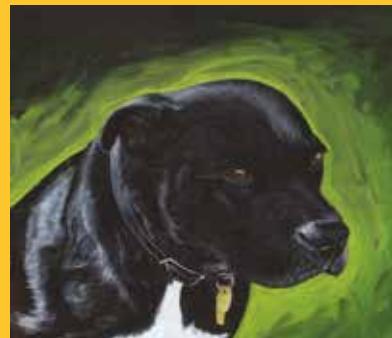
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[www.greatart.co.uk](http://www.greatart.co.uk)

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## PUPPY LOVE

We had a great response to last month's cover with many of you sharing your own dog portraits. Here are a few of our favourites...



Charles Pearson, *Leo*,  
acrylic on canvas.  
[www.charliepearson.co.uk](http://www.charliepearson.co.uk)



Jackie Ward, *Retriever*,  
oil on canvas.  
[www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/jackiewardart](http://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/jackiewardart)



Flora Daneman, *Worcester*,  
oil on canvas.  
[www.floradaneman.com](http://www.floradaneman.com)



# CARAN D'ACHE

Genève



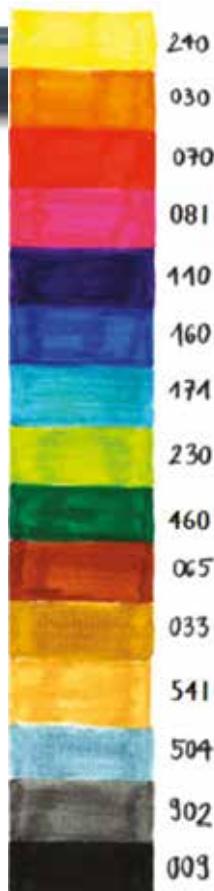
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## 9 ARTISTIC THINGS TO DO IN

## JANUARY



1

## JOHN BRATBY

When the Jerwood Gallery in Hastings set about staging a retrospective exhibition of the prolific local artist John Bratby, they decided to do things a little differently. With more than 1,500 paintings by the late painter believed to be in circulation, the gallery held a 'Bring Us Your Bratby' day on 19 October and were overwhelmed by the response. Collectors from across the UK brought along paintings to loan for the show while Bratby expert Julian Hartnoll was given the unenviable task of verifying them.

*Everything But the Kitchen Sink, Including the Kitchen Sink* (30 January to 17 April) offers admirers the chance to discover works that have long languished in private collections, as well as exploring the Royal Academician's personal archives of letters and photos. [www.jerwoodgallery.org](http://www.jerwoodgallery.org)



© THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

**2****DISCOVER**  
**National Gallery**  
**Masterpiece Tour**

The final year of this Christies-sponsored loan series sees Rembrandt's *Self Portrait at the Age of 63* (top) head to Belfast's Ulster Museum (15 January to 13 March) before touring to Kendal and Bristol. [www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

**3** **VISIT**  
**Watts Studios**

The restored studios of renowned Victorian painter GF Watts will open to the public for the first time on 26 January. View key works in context and get an insight into his working methods at Surrey's Watts Gallery Artists Village. [www.wattsgallery.org.uk](http://www.wattsgallery.org.uk)

**4****LEARN**  
**Royal Drawing School**

A new year brings a new term and plenty of inspiring 10-week courses to enjoy. Highlights include *Drawing at The British Museum* (starts 15 January).

[www.royaldrawingschool.org](http://www.royaldrawingschool.org)

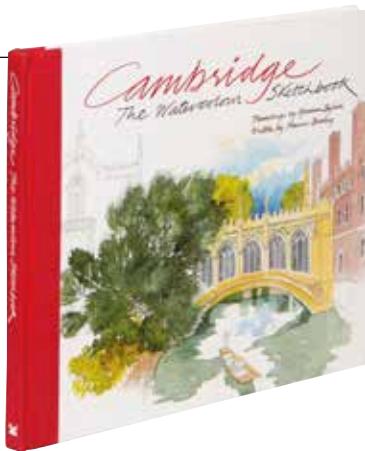
**5** **ESCAPE****Art Safari**

It's not all lions and elephants on an Art Safari holiday. January sees last-minute deals to Norway to paint the Northern Lights (below) with artist Karen Pearson (10-15 January) and New York for a chance to visit museums and sketch skyscrapers with Art Safari founder Mary-Anne Bartlett (13-19 January). [www.artsafari.co.uk](http://www.artsafari.co.uk)

**6** **BROWSE****London Art Fair**

You may never be able to afford to buy from this annual event at Islington's Business Design Centre (20-24 January), but it has more masterpieces per square metre than the Tate. As well as contemporary art for sale, The Jerwood Gallery in Hastings will be showing highlights from its collection.

[www.londonartfair.co.uk](http://www.londonartfair.co.uk)

**7****READ**  
**Cambridge – The Watercolour Sketchbook**

Artist Graham Byfield's delicate pencil-and-wash illustrations dominate this beautiful and informative guide to the university city's historic architecture (Laurence King, £19.95). [www.laurenceking.com](http://www.laurenceking.com)

**8** **DRAW****Drink and Draw Workshop**

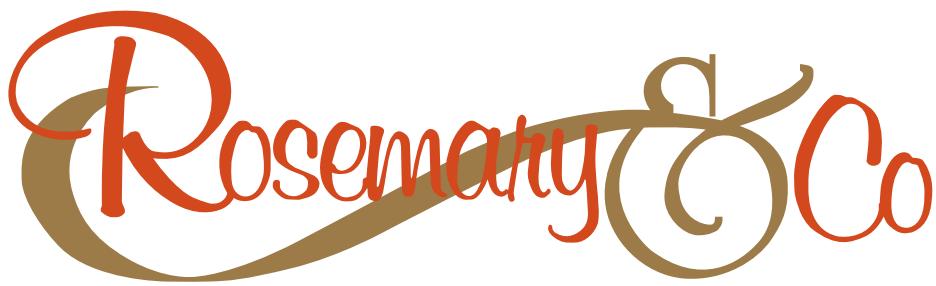
Find art classes intimidating? Head to the Bowery in Leeds for an informal session in the studio. You can listen to music and BYOB, while still benefitting from the experienced on-hand tutor. Next workshop is 29 January, 6pm. [www.thebowery.org](http://www.thebowery.org)

**9****WEAR**  
**Chatty Feet**

Brighten up a cold day with a pair of artist-themed novelty socks from Chatty Feet (£8 per pair). Choose from Frida Callus, Feetasso, Andy Sock-Hole or Vincent Van Toe, or buy a box set of four for £30. [www.chattyfeet.com](http://www.chattyfeet.com)



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# EXHIBITIONS

## JANUARY'S BEST ART SHOWS

### ENGLAND

#### Grayson Perry: The Vanity of Small Differences

9 January to 10 April

Six epic tapestries laced with dark humour.

Victoria Art Gallery, Bath. [www.victoriagal.org.uk](http://www.victoriagal.org.uk)

#### JMW Turner & The Art of Watercolour

Until 10 April

Rare display of Mr Turner's works in context.

The Higgins, Bedford. [www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk](http://www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk)

#### Enchanted Dreams:

#### The Pre-Raphaelite Art of ER Hughes

Until 21 February

Fantastical scenes and delicate child portraiture.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

[www.bmag.org.uk](http://www.bmag.org.uk)

#### David Jones: Vision and Memory

Until 21 February

Poetic watercolours of 20th-century England.

Pallant House Gallery, Chichester. [www.pallant.org.uk](http://www.pallant.org.uk)

#### Canaletto: Celebrating Britain

Until 14 February

Widescreen views in the Italian style.

Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Cumbria.

[www.abbothall.org.uk](http://www.abbothall.org.uk)

#### Brothers in Art

Until 19 February

Exemplary Pre-Raphaelite draughtsmanship.

Watts Gallery, Guildford. [www.wattsgallery.org.uk](http://www.wattsgallery.org.uk)

#### An Imagined Museum

Until 14 February

Major works by Warhol, Riley, Duchamp and more.

Tate Liverpool. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

### Giacomo Manzù: Sculptor and Draughtsman

15 January to 3 April

The Italian's portrait drawings and busts.

Estorick Collection, London.

[www.estorickcollection.com](http://www.estorickcollection.com)

### Masters of the Everyday:

#### Dutch Artists in the Age of Vermeer

Until 14 February

Peasants and parlours in the 17th century.

The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, London.

[www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)

### Michael Craig-Martin: Transience

Until 14 February

Drawing a line around modern life.

Serpentine Sackler Gallery, London.

[www.serpentinegalleries.org](http://www.serpentinegalleries.org)

### Tintin: Hergé's Masterpiece

Until 31 January

French cartoonist's adventures in watercolour.

Somerset House, London. [www.somersethouse.org.uk](http://www.somersethouse.org.uk)

### Alphonse Mucha: In Quest of Beauty

Until 20 March

Elegant Art Nouveau illustrations.

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

[www.scva.ac.uk](http://www.scva.ac.uk)

### Elisabeth Frink: The Presence of Sculpture

Until 28 February

The sculptor's methods revealed in detail.

Djanogly Gallery, Nottingham. [www.lakesidearts.org.uk](http://www.lakesidearts.org.uk)

### In the Making: Ruskin, Creativity & Craftsmanship

23 January to 5 June

Featuring Grayson Perry and Tracey Emin.

Millennium Gallery, Sheffield.

[www.museums-sheffield.org.uk](http://www.museums-sheffield.org.uk)

### SCOTLAND

#### Modern Scottish Women

Until 26 June

Inspiring revision of gender-biased art history.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. [www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org)

### BP Portrait Award 2015

Until 28 February

The blockbuster prize exhibition on tour.

Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh. [www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org)

### Scottish Identity in Colour

Until 31 January

Last chance to see this JD Fergusson display.

Fergusson Gallery, Perth. [www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk)

### WALES

#### Silent Explosion: Ivor Davies & Destruction in Art

Until 20 March

Painting, sculpture and performance.

National Museum Cardiff. [www.museumwales.ac.uk](http://www.museumwales.ac.uk)

### Our Glorious Coastline

Until 5 March

David Tress is among the featured painters.

MoMA Wales, Powys. [www.momawales.org.uk](http://www.momawales.org.uk)

### IRELAND

#### Hennessy Portrait Prize 2015

Until 14 February

The BP Portrait Award's plucky Irish cousin.

National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.

[www.nationalgallery.ie](http://www.nationalgallery.ie)



### PAINTING THE MODERN GARDEN

30 January to 20 April

"I perhaps owe it to flowers," wrote Claude Monet, "that I became a painter." From humble backyards to cultivated gardens, art and horticulture have gone hand in hand for years. This Royal Academy spring blockbuster collects together floral masterpieces, from Monet's waterlilies to Munch's apple blossoms, and places them in the context of broader art movements. Our pick of the bunch is Joaquin Sorolla's *Louis Comfort Tiffany* (left), a 1911 portrait of the American artist and lamp designer in his garden on Long Island. Royal Academy of Arts, London. [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)

# 2016 PREVIEW

## SIX OF THE YEAR'S MUST-SEE BLOCKBUSTERS



### 1 BOTTICELLI REIMAGINED

5 March to 3 July

More than 500 years after his death, the artistic influence of Sandro Botticelli endures. Some 50 of the Italian artist's works will sit alongside tributes from the worlds of art, fashion, photography and design.

V&A, London. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

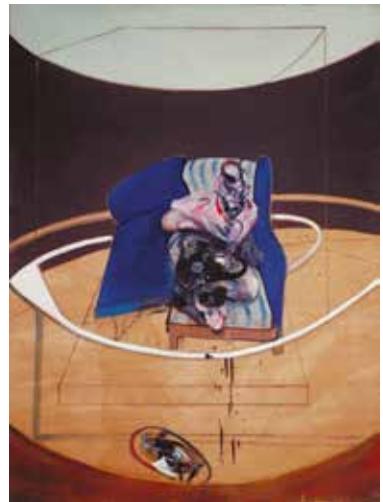


### 2 DAVID HOCKNEY: 79 PORTRAITS & 2 STILL LIVES

2 July to 2 October

After his record-breaking 2012 exhibition at the same venue, Hockney returns with another crowd-pleaser. The Yorkshireman allowed himself three days per portrait, calling them "20-hour exposures".

Royal Academy of Arts, London.  
[www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)



### 3 FRANCIS BACON: INVISIBLE ROOMS

18 May to 18 September

This retrospective of the great Soho painter focuses on his use of ghostly structures to frame the figures. Around 35 major works will explore how Bacon adapted the device across his career. Tate Liverpool. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)



### 4 ENGLISH ROSE: FEMININE BEAUTY FROM VAN DYCK TO SARGENT

14 May to 25 September

What do contemporary ideas of beauty tell us about the era in which we live? This extensive exhibition collects five centuries' worth of painted portraits to answer that question. Bowes Museum, Durham. [www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk](http://www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk)



### 5 GEORGIA O'KEEFE

6 July to 30 October

More than just a painter of flowers, this comprehensive retrospective celebrates the American artist as a founder of modernism, a feminist pioneer and an avant-garde intellectual. Tate Modern, London. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)



### 6 STUBBS AND THE WILD

25 June to 2 October

The centrepiece of Holburne Museum's centenary celebrations explores the disconnection between George Stubbs' exotic, often fantastical paintings and the polite Georgian society in which he exhibited. Wildlife painters in particular will enjoy seeing his masterful rendering of fur up close. Holburne Museum, Bath. [www.holburne.org](http://www.holburne.org)

BOOK  
NOW!

# FRESH PAINT

INSPIRING NEW ARTWORKS, STRAIGHT OFF THE EASEL

## JOSEPH RAFFAEL

American watercolourist Joseph Raffael is an artist who thinks big and works small. His dazzling paintings often measure several metres in width and feature a kaleidoscopic palette of hues, yet each work is also possessed of an obsessive level of detail too. As the late, great Australian art critic Robert Hughes once put it, “Despite their iconic serenity when seen from a distance, Raffael’s paintings disclose a bejewelled profusion of incident close up.”

His latest masterpiece, *Life Times*, measures a relatively modest

1.2 metres wide yet is typically broad in scope. The fossil acts as a metaphor for life itself, surrounded by pearlescent stones in rich blues and deep rust reds. “For me painting is an adventure – a trip taken always for the first

time to a never-known before place, an exercise in making the invisible visible, an opportunity to be surprised and altered forever as a result,” he says. “Just this afternoon the idea of a title for a new work came to me: *This Moment, Only Once*. Painting a painting is that for me:

thousands, even tens of thousand of moments in which the brush combines with water and coloured minerals; the colours and shapes meeting always for the first time and never to happen in the same way again.”

### TOP TIP

For bright colours like Joseph, use no more than two or three different pigments in any one mix

RIGHT Joseph Raffael, *Life Times*, watercolour on paper, 115x128cm

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1933, Joseph has been living in Cap D’Antibes in the south of France since the mid-1980s, when he moved there with his second wife, Lannis. From his bright garden studio with a view overlooking the Mediterranean, he has firmly established himself as a world-class painter in the former home of Picasso and Matisse.

In the 1950s, Joseph studied under Josef Albers (author of the iconic *Interaction of Colour*) at the Yale School of Fine Arts in Connecticut, yet ask him how he successfully balances such a vast array of pigments in his latest painting and he offers a more abstract answer. “I’m not sure it can be explained from a practical point of view. I see painting not as a feet-on-the-ground activity, but rather as a natural, instinctual endeavour.”

Thankfully, a new monograph, *Moving Toward the Light*, offers a little more insight. A period spent working as a textile designer has influenced his patchwork approach to composition, while his habit of including dabs of colour in the borders of his paintings is a result of his days spent creating lithographs with David Salgado some 35 years ago.

What we can say for sure is that given Joseph often makes as few as four or five large-scale watercolours in a single year, every fresh masterpiece deserves to be celebrated.

[www.josephraffael.com](http://www.josephraffael.com)





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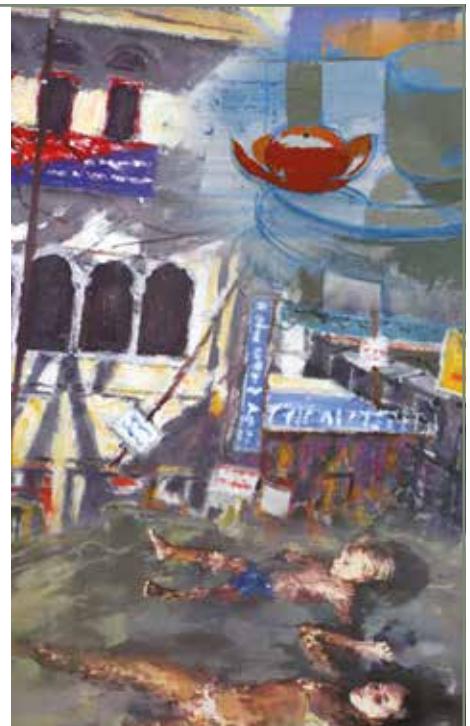
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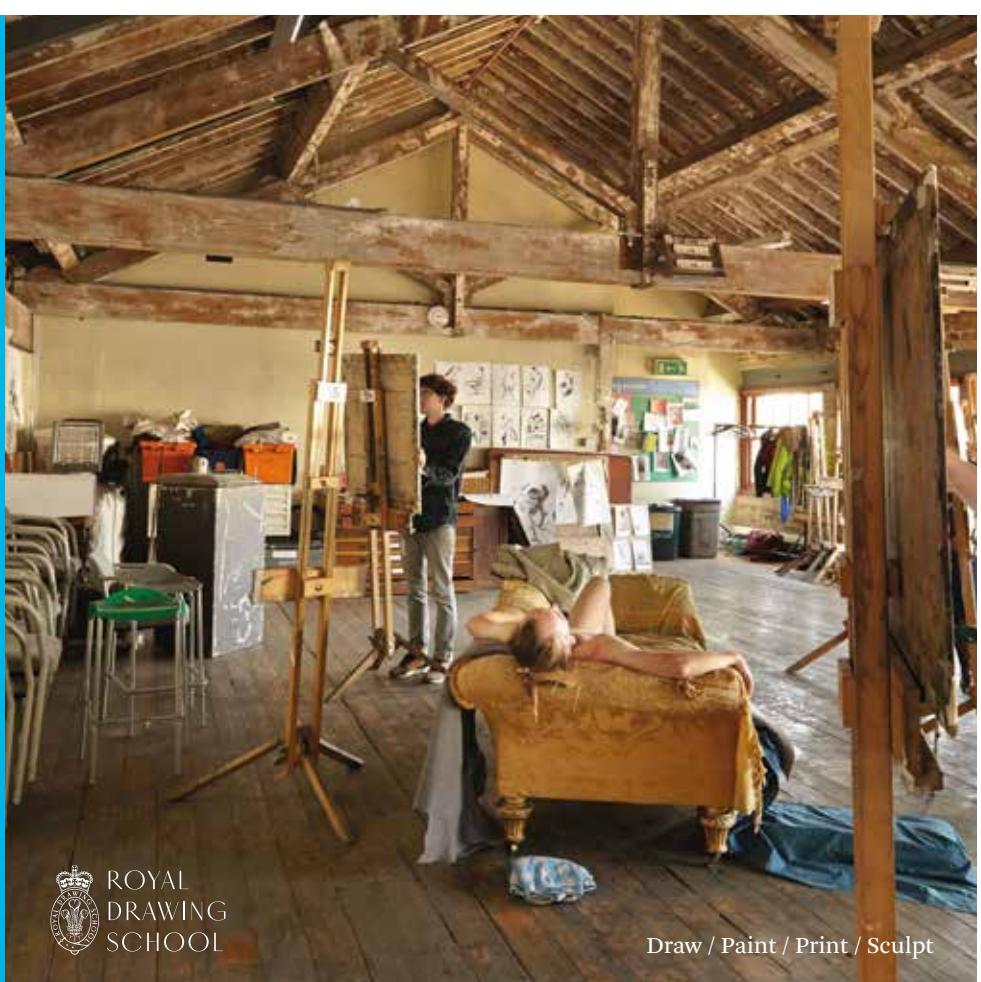
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### ZOEY FRANK

With its muted colour palette, well-placed tonal shifts and contrasts in texture, Zoey Frank's *Thistles* is a gorgeous piece of contemporary classical painting that rewards repeat viewings. Perhaps the key to the oil painting's overall success, however, is the rather sensitive addition of a new medium: gold leaf. It is only the second time that the young American oil painter has experimented with the medium and she was inspired by seeing medieval works during a recent trip to Paris. "I like how the gold has such different properties from the oil," she says. "The reflective surface makes the value relationships quite different when the painting is viewed from various angles."

While Zoey's techniques are new, the subject of *Thistles* is something of a departure too. "Flowers have always felt too ostentatious for me to paint, but the dead thistles which hold seeds for new growth are very appealing to me."

Zoey began by spending several hours adjusting the composition, trimming the thistles and creating an artfully messy arrangement on the table. An underpainting established the position of the main objects on the panel, before she laid down the gold leaf, and added the thistles

and wallpaper patterns over the top. "Gold leaf requires a more planned and systematic painting procedure than I've been feeling inclined toward lately, so it made me slow down and work a little differently," she admits.

Her initial aim was to use a limited palette of golds and browns, as a means to explore subtle shifts in colour and tone – but that soon had to change. "Once I neared the end of the painting, I realised that my plan just wasn't working visually so I added the turquoise pieces of paper. Having a bit of that contrasting colour allowed the painting to eventually settle into place for me."

Born in Colorado in 1987, Zoey was atelier trained at the Gage Academy of Art in Seattle where she has since returned to teach. Her debut solo exhibition at the Haynes Galleries drew upon her *Palimpsests* series of figurative scenes, while she has also recently been working on a series of European landscape studies and a master copy of Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait Wearing a Toque and a Gold Chain*. It is rather apt that gold is becoming a theme for an artist who seems to have the Midas touch. Her second solo exhibition next autumn promises to be something special.

[www.zoeyfrank.com](http://www.zoeyfrank.com)

ABOVE Zoey Frank,  
*Thistles*, oil and  
gold leaf on panel,  
51x41cm

>



### ROBERTO PONTE

The *Artists & Illustrators* website is home to the Portfolio Plus scheme, an online gallery of work by readers of the magazine. More than 10,000 readers have created personalised portfolios and used the opportunity to share their latest works with friends, family and even potential clients (more than 104,000 unique users visit the site every month).

One artist who is clearly making the most of the scheme is the Italian illustrator Roberto Ponte. Mixing ink, graphite and watercolour, he describes himself as a cross between an urban sketcher and an Impressionist painter.

Born in Rome in 1981, he moved to London two years ago and quickly established himself as a full-time artist, completing commissions and producing his own architecture-inspired paintings. Roberto's artistic journey began in earnest when he spent 18 months studying painting techniques in Venice alongside Geoffrey Humphries. The self-styled 'maestro' teaches small classes of students and divides time between plein air work in the

'City of Light' and in-depth figurative classes in the famous Giudecca studio.

"The most useful thing that Geoffrey taught me was the importance of capturing the present moment while you draw," says Roberto. "He also showed me how to catch the first impression of a subject in front of me by avoiding unnecessary details. You need to be fast to work in that way."

Roberto has since honed his skills in a number of favourite European cities, including London, Amsterdam and Venice. His latest pen-and-wash painting, *Street in San Francisco*, was based on a recent visit to California with his family. The Italian artist fell in love with the city's unique mix of rolling hills and endless tram cables, which he photographed and sketched on location.

"When I got back to London, I decided to reproduce the sketch in a larger size adding some splash of watercolour to the black ink lines and trying to convey the movement of the scene with fast and heavy brushstrokes."

[www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/robertoponte](http://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/robertoponte)

### TOP TIP

Contrast precise lines of black ink with spatters of colour to create a sense of movement

ABOVE *Street in San Francisco*, watercolour and ink on paper, 51x41cm

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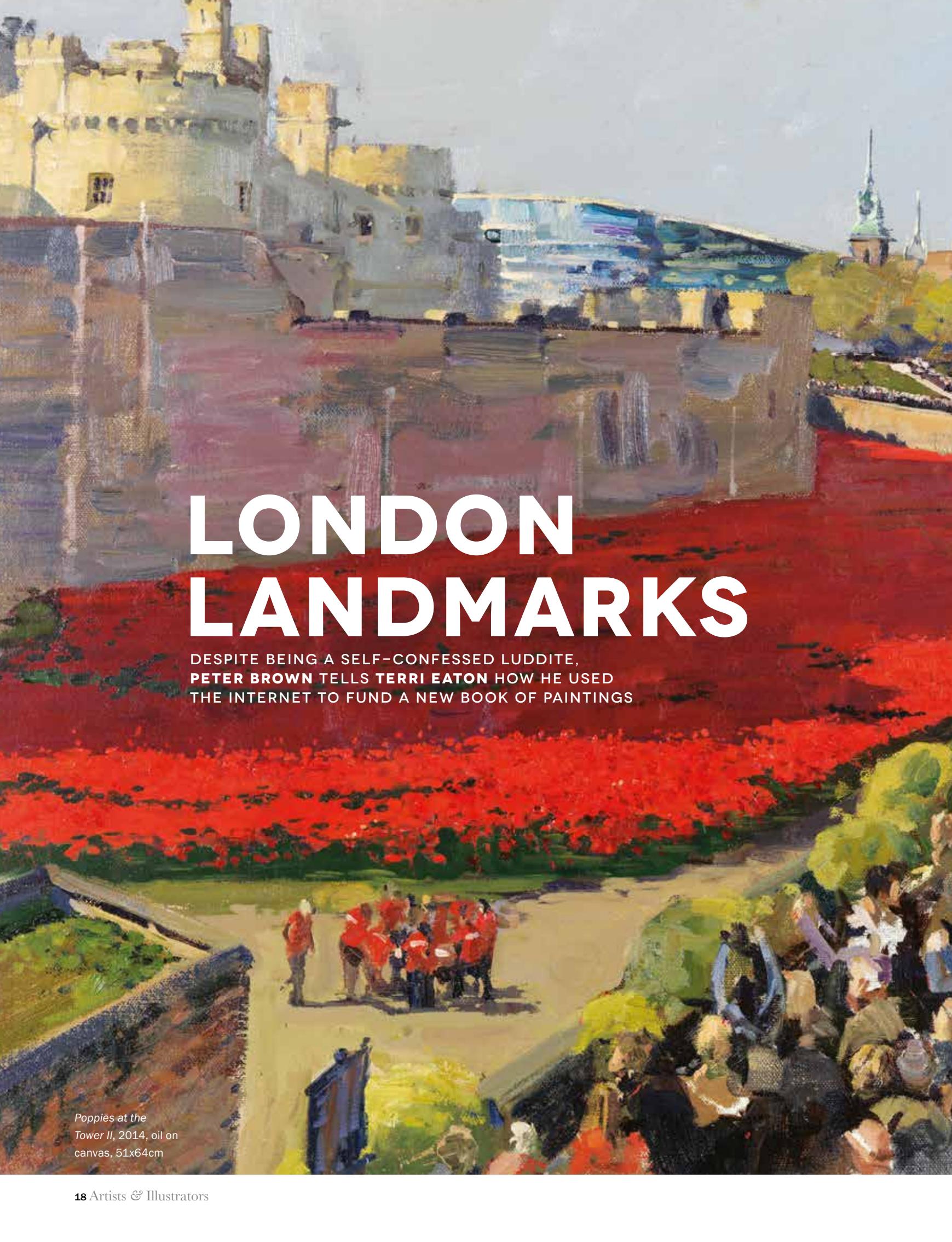


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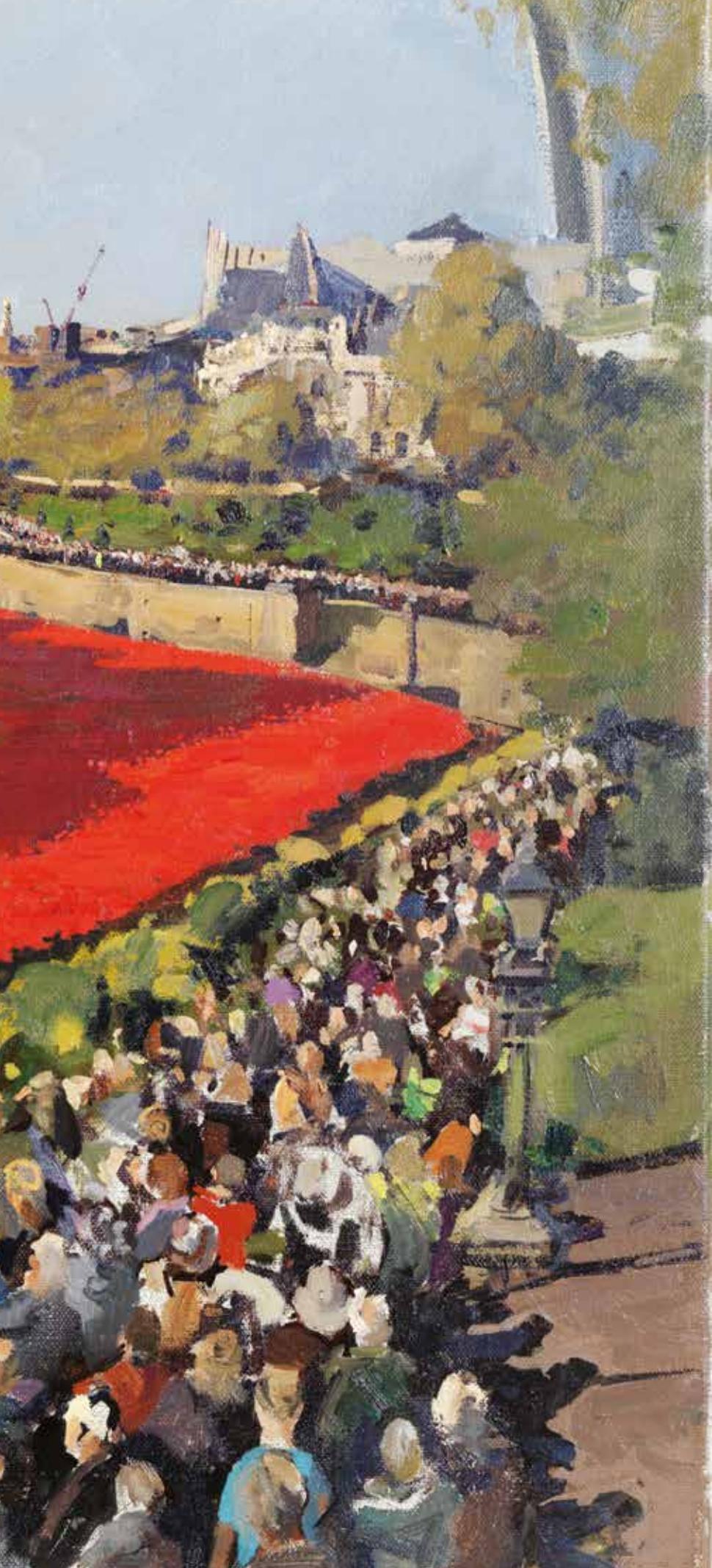
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# LONDON LANDMARKS

DESPITE BEING A SELF-CONFESSED LUDDITE,  
**PETER BROWN TELLS TERRI EATON** HOW HE USED  
THE INTERNET TO FUND A NEW BOOK OF PAINTINGS

*Poppies at the  
Tower II*, 2014, oil on  
canvas, 51x64cm



With every new year comes a list of fresh resolutions, whether it's making time to paint a self-portrait, promising to spend more hours in the life room or just vowing to clean your brushes after every studio session. For Bath-based artist Peter Brown, aka 'Pete the Street', he was adamant that 2015 would be the year he published a book of his London paintings. "I've always wanted to do it, as the city has been a constant source of inspiration to me," he says, "but I self-published *Brown's Bath* in 2008 and had to write a cheque for £18,000 in the process. I mentioned this to my brother in law, Gary, and that's when he told me about Kickstarter."

Kickstarter is the world's largest funding platform for creative projects. Launched in 2009, the website gives artists, inventors, entrepreneurs and other creative types the chance to find financial backers from across the globe. With this in mind, Pete decided Kickstarter would be the best way to bring his London coffee-table book to life. However, it wasn't an easy ride. As a self-confessed technophobe, the world of social media and video blogs felt a little alien to him. "There are artists out there who can write and create their own websites and Kickstarter will be straightforward for them, but then there are old luddites like me who know the value of it but can't wrap their head around it," he says. "Thankfully Gary helped me out a lot and my mate Neil lent a hand on the video, too. Having a two-minute video that people can easily view and share makes the project more accessible."

Pete's campaign went live in June, after which he had four weeks to raise his £15,000 target. Funding on Kickstarter is all or nothing – if you don't reach your funding target, you receive none of the money pledged. The most popular way to encourage donations is to give your backers rewards for their generosity. In Pete's case, these ranged from a mention in the book for £5 to a full painting day with the artist in either Bath or London if you pledged £500.

"My painting days were popular, but maybe that's because I've never offered any kind of teaching before. Signed books are really important too," he says. "Amazon has immediately undercut the retail price but as the artist, I can sign a book or offer a sketch in the front. Personal touches like that are what put you ahead of Amazon."

By the end of the four weeks, Pete raised a staggering £17,414. "I can't sing Kickstarter's praises enough," he says. "They open up a whole new world for people who are rich in time and creativity but not money."

Each of the 288 pledges Pete received is a well-deserved pat on the back for his commitment to producing exquisite landscapes of England's capital city throughout his career. What's more, his use of online crowdfunding is an example to us all. Why not make 2016 the year you try and get your own pet project off the ground?

Turn over to read Pete's stories behind some of his favourite London paintings from the new project... >



▲ SNOW, HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE, 2009,  
OIL ON CANVAS, 51X64CM

"A rare blanket of snow landed on London in February 2009 for about three or four days and I jumped in the car, knowing that a few snowy cityscapes would be amazing. In a way, I regret not venturing further into central London and painting somewhere like Trafalgar Square but I didn't want to spend all my time in the car trying to get there so I hopped out at Hammersmith and it was everywhere."

"The best thing about painting snow is its uniformity. It made the scene quite monochromatic, bleaching out expansive areas of the bridge, making it great for focusing on tones. However, when snowflakes get into the paint medium, they crystalise and you can sometimes end up with ice in the painting. Plus, it's pretty cold."

"My top tip for anyone wanting to paint in the snow is to pack something to stand on top of to stop your toes from dropping off. I suppose in terms of positioning it was a bit dicey to paint on a pavement next to a slippery road too, but luckily I'm still here to tell the tale."

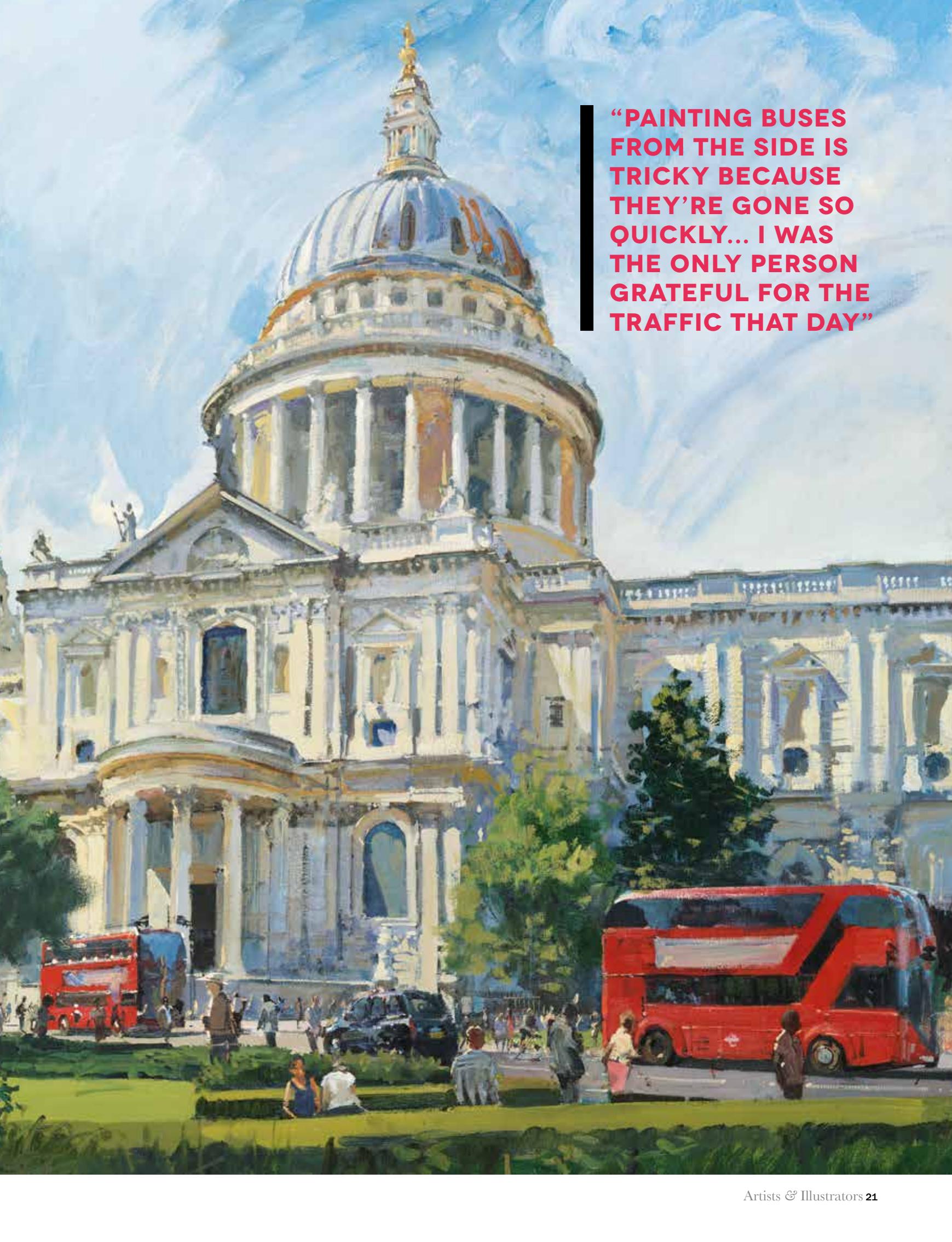
➤ LONDON BUSES AND SAINT PAUL'S, 2014,  
OIL ON CANVAS, 76X89CM

"St Paul's is hard to draw, but it's such an iconic subject and the ellipse of the dome poses a good challenge."

"I could have just painted it on its own but I wanted to include a new Routemaster because I think they're really cool – you can't do a London series without a few red buses. I always hone in on them, especially when I'm painting a subject like St Paul's, because it gives you a patriotic red, white and blue palette."

"Buses going sideways are always trickier to paint because they're gone in seconds but the traffic was pretty bad so I had a good chance to study them. I was probably the only person grateful for the traffic that day."

"The buses give you an idea of perspective, movement and space, but also the vast size of St Paul's. It's one thing to see the cathedral from Waterloo Bridge, but to get up close is really special."



**“PAINTING BUSES FROM THE SIDE IS TRICKY BECAUSE THEY’RE GONE SO QUICKLY... I WAS THE ONLY PERSON GRATEFUL FOR THE TRAFFIC THAT DAY”**



▲ **NELSON'S COLUMN, 2006,**  
OIL ON CANVAS, 89X76CM

"At an exhibition once, someone asked when I was going to paint a picture with the top of Nelson's Column in it. Whenever I paint Trafalgar Square, I'm attracted to the fountains and the people dotted around. I usually end up doing long, thin horizontal paintings with a busy foreground. For this painting, I studied the clouds and tried to think how the swirling formations could bring that action instead

"The drawing was something I struggled with, but it was a good test in vertical perspective. I hung the painting in our front room after I'd finished it and my wife and I would be sat watching telly and we'd say, 'It's wonky, isn't it?' so I'd end up taking a bit off one side."

● **THE CITY AND BLACKFRIARS, AFTERNOON,**  
2010, OIL ON CANVAS, 15X61CM

"This was a juicy view to paint, with the lovely red arches of Blackfriars Bridge in the distance. Winter is a great time for painting water because it's muddy and the colours are really rich when the sun is lower and shadows are darker.

"I positioned my box easel on the South Bank just after Waterloo Bridge, where it slightly juts into the water. It was high tide so I like that there's a sense I'm in the river. However, wind is the biggest issue when you're this exposed. I find rain gives you opportunities to use dramatic colours and snow can make any scene more interesting but wind is just a pain in the arse. I anchored my easel down with my paintbox, but I have lost a board in the river once."



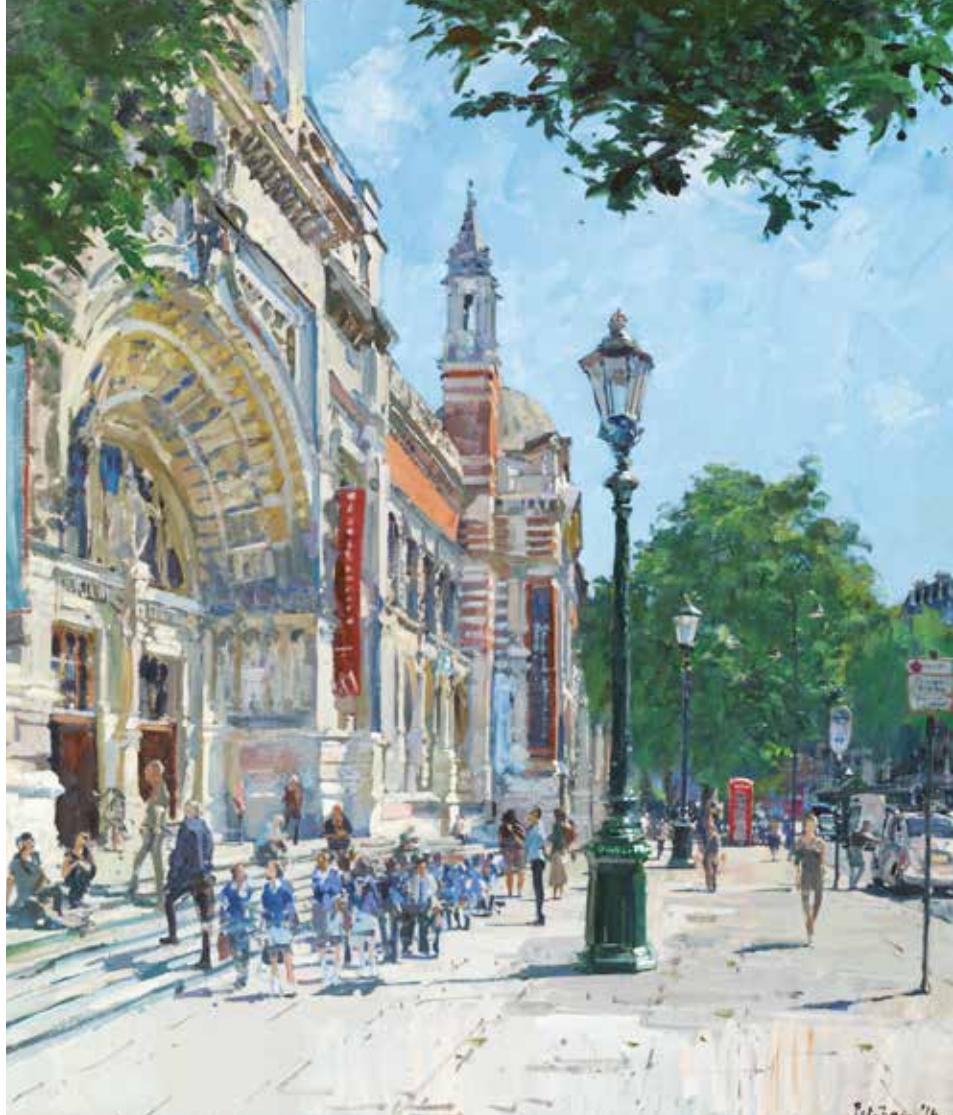
> **SCHOOL TRIP, THE V&A, 2014,  
OIL ON CANVAS, 76X89CM**

"I'm known as a landscape artist, but I'd say one thing that my work often lacks is narrative. With this particular painting, however, I feel like I've changed this.

"I'd originally set out to paint that amazing entrance of the Victoria and Albert Museum on what was a gloriously sunny day. However, it's a classic venue for these huge school trips and when I saw this perfect line of children walking towards me, I couldn't ignore the challenge of trying to paint them.

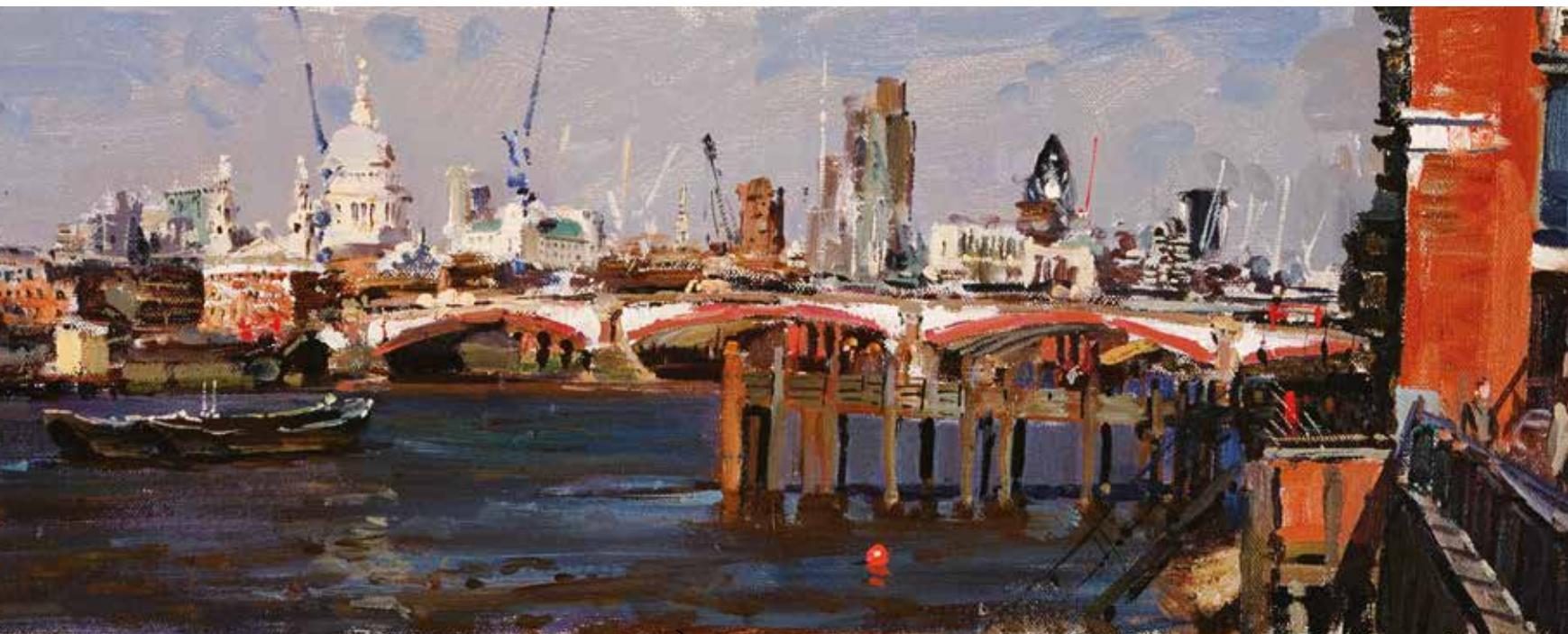
"I knew this was a brilliant chance for me to paint from life and try to incorporate a story into the scene. It was a challenge because the children were all fidgeting and the teachers were buzzing around trying to control them but I concentrated on picking out the colours in the children's ties and using the different heights to reflect the feeling of movement in the line.

"Plein air painting is usually about capturing the light and the specific moment, so to have a picture that is about a happening is a nice change for me."



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**"SCHOOL TRIP, THE V&A WAS A CHALLENGE TO PAINT... I CONCENTRATED ON PICKING OUT THE COLOURS IN THE CHILDREN'S TIES AND USING THE DIFFERENT HEIGHTS TO REFLECT THE FEELING OF MOVEMENT IN THE LINE"**



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Ⓐ **WINTER SUN, PORTOBELLO ROAD (THE ELECTRIC CINEMA), 2014, OIL ON CANVAS, 51X102CM**

Ⓑ **WINTER RAIN, PORTOBELLO ROAD (THE ELECTRIC CINEMA), 2014, OIL ON CANVAS, 51X102CM**

“These two scenes were painted in the same session and they represent both the beauty and the dilemma of painting *en plein air* – the changing weather.

“In the first instance, I went along to do a sunny painting because the light was *contre-jour*, creating silhouettes. Luckily, I had two canvases with me and, as the weather changed, I thought it would be good to paint a rainy version too. It’s still a brilliant view but I was being pragmatic.

“It was interesting to see how the scene changed from sparkling morning light in one moment to being quite a dowdy scene in the next moment. The nice thing was that the Electric Cinema’s neon sign really pings when it rains – the red light that it emits becomes more interesting.

“I could paint the Portobello Road in Notting Hill forever and I love the market there. You still see people who have been there for generations and generations. It’s classic London. Visually, there’s such a variety of things to paint as well. The candy colours of the buildings are brilliant – it’s a great part of the city.”

The crowdfunded book, *London: Paintings by Peter Brown*, is published in December, RRP £35. An exhibition featuring works from the book, *London*, runs from 13 January to 12 February at Messum’s, London W1. [www.peterbrownneac.com](http://www.peterbrownneac.com)



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IN THE STUDIO WITH

# JOHN HITCHENS

THE ABSTRACT LANDSCAPE ARTIST OPENS THE DOORS TO THE SUSSEX STUDIO HE INHERITED FROM HIS PAINTER FATHER. WORDS AND PHOTOS: ANNE PURKISS



**Your grandfather, Alfred, and your father, Ivon, were both painters. As a child in your father's studio, did it occur to you that this was an unusual environment?**  
No. I didn't think about it at the time. I just thought about my room. All the other rooms in the house were full of frames and canvases – it was just the way it was. When I went to other people's homes, they were just ordinary. And to this day, the last thing that I want to do is live in a nice, tidy, ordinary house.

**When did you first decide to follow in their footsteps?**  
I never decided that I wanted to be a painter. My father thought, "Well obviously he doesn't seem to do anything except paint and play the guitar, I suppose he ought to



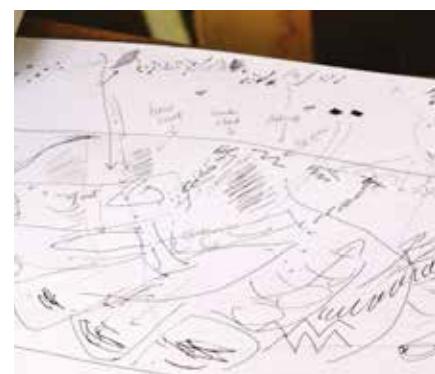
go to art school..." So he arranged for me to go to Bath [the Bath Academy of Art at Corsham Court].

**The titled one of your solo exhibitions *Evolving Boundaries*. What was the thinking behind that?**

My early paintings, like *Selsey Marsh, Dusk*, 1972, were all painted out of doors. At that time, the studio was merely a place to store the works and see them in frames. At some point, when I went up to Scotland, I thought, "This is what John Hitchens does: painting in Scotland". I got interested in the use of natural dyes, partly from watching my wife Ros making her tapestries.

**As your style became more abstract, the sky gradually vanished from your landscapes. Was that deliberate?**

I always think of the view on the edge of the South Downs looking across the Weald. It is an almost aerial view and the sky gets squeezed out of the picture. I also started doing aerial photography. Gradually, my work became more abstract with big coloured shapes that were still loosely based on land references.





“

**TO THIS DAY, THE LAST THING THAT I WANT TO DO IS LIVE IN A NICE, TIDY, ORDINARY HOUSE**

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Since your work became more abstract, has it also become more studio-based as a result?

Yes. In the past I would often go out looking for a new subject and I quickly found that I'd be choosing a view that was quite like the one I'd done before. Now I get ideas from the objects that I have gathered, often because they link to something else that I've done. So the inspiration comes out of the work and the studio, rather than from me looking for a view.

Looking around the studio, there are plenty of objects to choose from.

Anything with cross references interests me. You can put two objects next to each other that are completely different and then you suddenly discover that they're not. There's always a connection, be it in colour or shape or balance.

Why do you stack them in piles everywhere?

Well, I stack up my ideas – that's the trouble! You could say that the studio is a living installation.

What other sources of inspiration are important?

I couldn't paint here without music and without the animals. They are a feel-good factor: the studio wouldn't be the same if there were no cats or if there was no music there. When you are painting indoors, the music contains you in the room. It centres you on where you are. You want nothing between you and what you are doing, you don't want to be thinking of what's happening out there.

What music do you prefer?

I like anything that has repetitive beats in. I listen to a lot of [American composer] Philip Glass. The rhythms I find there are like the structure of a painting and the sounds are the decoration.

One of your paintings, *From Sombre Lands*, inspired a piece of piano music by the American composer Peter Dayton. Have you met?

Yes, he came to visit earlier this year, and there is a painting for him waiting to be finished.

Looking ahead, what is the plan for you?

About once a year, I'll take some cardboard and jot down little drawings, a shortlist of the more urgent things I want to do. There is such a backlog of threads that need to be followed, quite apart from all the other ideas that I might take up.

John's work can be seen at the Moncrieff-Bray Gallery, near Petworth, West Sussex. [www.johnhitchens.com](http://www.johnhitchens.com)



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If this sounds like just what you're looking for, you'll be pleased to hear that our new 2016 courses are now available so why

not start to revitalise your painting career today by calling 01328 730203 or e-mailing us directly to reserve your space to [jane@norfolkpaintingschool.com](mailto:jane@norfolkpaintingschool.com)

*"Thank you so much for opening a door to a new world for me. In a way, I'm glad I haven't done this sort of painting before, although I realise that this is what I've always wanted to do: the brilliant crash course Martin gave last week has given me straightforward, honest steps to follow... The Norfolk Painting School is a totally holistic course. To be taught so many principles and unique techniques in 5 days is a feat, I'll definitely be coming again... You are all to be congratulated for putting on such a comprehensive course. Oh and I forgot all the materials - no small thing.... The camera was extremely helpful ,everything in this course is really thought out. Well done.*

*Five Day Workshop March 2014 , MB*

Read more student reviews at our website and see their work on our Instagram feed on Facebook.

# THE WORKING ARTIST

LAURA BOSWELL ON WHY WE CAN LEARN A LOT FROM THE JAPANESE ATTITUDE TO CREATIVITY



**A** few years ago, I attended two woodblock printmaking residencies in Japan. As well as picking up a new skill, I also learned a lot about the Japanese attitude to creating a working space that owed nothing to size and everything to attitude of mind.

The Japanese accept that the desire to be creative is not only reasonable, it is a positive gift. It is all too easy to put the need to make art last on the to-do list of important things. This feeling of squeezing in time and space for your art as a guilty pleasure only makes it harder to justify annexing the spare room, paying to rent space or pushing the family off the end of the kitchen table.

It is difficult to defend the need for a creative place, let alone the time to use it, but take a tip from my Japanese teachers and accept that having a space in which to be creative, however small, is a perfectly rational human need – whatever your friends and family may think.

There is plenty of helpful information on the internet about using studio space effectively, though some websites are more grandiose than others: bespoke plan chests and

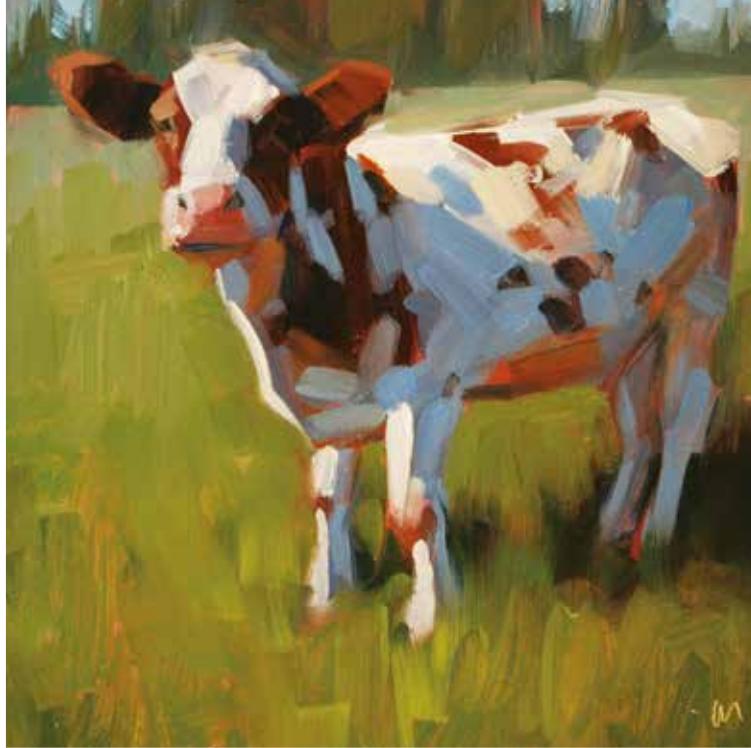
archive storage are hardly necessary when you are just starting out. However humble and temporary your workspace might be, always take it seriously and expect others to do the same. In Japan, my entire 'studio' amounted to a small desk, but my teachers nevertheless showed great respect for my space and expected me to do the same.

Whichever way you go, remember that the tools of your art are often beautiful in themselves and devising storage that doubles as a display of your materials and tools is not only practical, but also a way to celebrate your creativity. My favourite example of this was my solution to storing my large stock of printed greetings cards. Rather than stacking dismal cardboard boxes, we put up shelving in our house and created a wall of matching storage with pretty labels. Plan your workspace imaginatively and it will encourage your creativity in return.

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“  
THE JAPANESE  
UNDERSTAND THAT  
A CREATIVE SPACE  
IS A RATIONAL  
HUMAN NEED  
”

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# LITTLE AND OFTEN

DEVELOPING A PAINTING-A-DAY HABIT IS A GREAT WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS AND SELL YOUR ART. OVER THE NEXT SIX PAGES **STEVE PILL** SPEAKS TO FOUR ARTISTS WHO PUBLISH NEW ART ONLINE EVERY DAY, BEGINNING WITH THE UNDISPUTED 'QUEEN OF DAILY PAINTERS', **CAROL MARINE**

A new year is a time for new resolutions. Get yourself into good habits on January 1st and the promise of a better life lies await in the year ahead. While this train of thought usually applies to gym memberships and faddy diets, it is equally applicable to your creative life too. One of the best and most immediate ways to improve your art is always simply to just do it. Finding time to paint or draw in a busy schedule is tricky, however, which is why the 'daily painting' phenomenon is such an appealing option for many artists.

Daily painters are an online community of like-minded artists who create new, small works every day and post them on the Internet. Carol Marine is one of the original daily painters, having produced a work-a-day for more than a decade – on her own blog at first and then via the Daily Paintworks site that she set up with her husband David in 2006. Making a new painting each day may sound like a big commitment, but Carol admits that the first one is the hardest. "Up to that point I had mostly done very large paintings, which are tough to experiment with because they are such a big investment in time and money," she explains. "And because I wasn't willing to experiment, I had a tight style that hadn't changed much over the years."

Carol's first daily painting was equally tight, so she vowed to experiment with the second, reasoning that all she had to lose was an hour or two of her time. "When you compose and paint a small painting, you learn just as much about composition, colour, value and paint application as you do from a large painting. And because you can do more small paintings in the same time, you generally learn faster. I can honestly say I learned more in the first six months of daily painting than I did from the previous five years."

Finding the time to paint is another matter, however. With a newly-adopted son to look after, Carol was hardly blessed with a blank diary but she used it to her advantage. "The time limitation was a very important part of my success in the beginning," she says. "When I had the limit of nap time, I realised that if I did anything >

**"I LEARNED MORE IN MY FIRST SIX MONTHS OF DAILY PAINTING THAN I DID FROM THE PREVIOUS FIVE YEARS"**

CLOCKWISE FROM  
TOP LEFT *All Off; Moo; A Beautiful Life; A Quiet Room; Over Abundance; Chuck Mate - #2000*, 20x20cm; *Little Dormers; Bug Under a Tree*  
CENTRE *Spruce It Up*  
All paintings by Carol Marine, oil on board, 15x15cm, unless otherwise stated



else first, I might not have time to finish. So I started right away, every time. I tell my students that if they have any trouble with procrastination, they should set a time to 'go to work'. During that time they shouldn't answer the phone, check emails or any other tasks that come up. Once you get a routine going, it's much easier to maintain."

Over the years of daily painting, Carol's style has changed markedly. She paints almost exclusively in *alla prima* oils now and has become very economical in both her choice of subjects (often single items on solid coloured backgrounds) and her handling of them. "I like to simplify my objects to a minimum number of brushstrokes, so anything with a pattern or design doesn't work well," she says. "My advice to anyone starting out is to try and paint what you're attracted to and you will learn very quickly whether it works for you and whether you enjoy it or not."

If Carol makes the daily painting habit seem rather effortless, it is cheering for the rest of us to hear that there is still a pile of unsuccessful works stacked up in her Texas studio. In fact, it was this that inspired the Bad Art Destruction Party, a now-regular event to which she invites close artist friends to bring along their own failed paintings to dispose of them in a cathartic, communal atmosphere. "Because most of us paint in oil, I didn't want to burn them so we destroy them in other ways. For panels we use magic markers and write 'What was I thinking?!' or other similar things on them, and then try to break them over our knees."

And while Carol is developing a much better sense of what sells ("The more interesting and varied the value composition, the more the painting stands out"), she has no plans to try and reduce her piles of unsuccessful paintings just yet. "This year I had an epiphany about failure," she reveals. "I realised that if my pile is small, it means I haven't been experimenting. And if I'm not experimenting, it means I'm not growing as an artist. So I suddenly went from hating my 'didn't work' pile, to loving it." Carol's book, *Daily Painting*, is published by Watson-Guptill, RRP £16.99. [www.carolmarine.com](http://www.carolmarine.com)

TOP Carol Marine,  
*Over Hill and Dale*, oil on board,  
15x30cm  
OPPOSITE PAGE,  
FROM TOP  
Roger Åkesson,  
*Landscape Abstraction 7*,  
acrylic on canvas,  
100x100cm; Roger  
Åkesson, *Bird's Nest Abstraction 50*,  
acrylic on board, 33x41cm

## GRAB YOUR BRUSHES! FIVE REASONS TO TRY DAILY PAINTING IN 2016



### 1. SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Forget the idea that masterpieces must be huge. Some of the world's most admired paintings are petite. Working small also makes it easier to paint every day and be economical with materials.

### 2. YOUR TECHNIQUES IMPROVE

The more you paint, the better you get – it's as simple as that. By carving out dedicated time every day, no matter how brief, you will soon start to see progress as your confidence and skills improve.

### 3. YOU CAN BE SOCIAL

Social media thrives on regular posts so producing new work every day gives you something to shout about. Likewise, new content posted to personal blogs or websites will boost your Google rankings and help more people discover you.

### 4. FAILURES ARE LESS FREQUENT

Not every daily painting will go to plan but by working every day, you will begin to understand what makes a good picture and also iron out any technique issues you may have. Besides, if it goes wrong, there's always tomorrow!

### 5. BUYERS LOVE DAILY PAINTINGS

Art lovers are more inclined to take a chance on smaller works – they are easier to find space for at home and less of a financial commitment. On the flip side, smaller works are more economical to make and you can quickly build up a big client base.

## ROGER ÅKESSON

Based in Malmö, Sweden, this 52-year-old daily painter makes semi-abstract works that are inspired by the bright palettes of Warhol and Van Gogh

### When did you make your first 'daily painting'?

I started a blog in 2011. I was inspired by other artists that I found online, including some 'daily painters'. I had also reached the point where I wanted to grow as an artist, be less illustrative and become more contemporary. The concept of painting smaller but more regularly spoke to me – it gave me more room to explore and develop my art.

### You regularly upload work to the Daily Paintworks website. What are the pros and cons of selling work in this way?

Daily Paintworks gives me the opportunity to have a gallery with all my paintings and also connect it to my blog and Facebook page. I also get great exposure from being a featured artist on Daily Paintworks. One of the advantages with small daily paintings is that you can offer affordable art to the customers. On the downside, as a Swedish painter on an American website, I can't compete on the same terms, since my shipping costs to the US and elsewhere are higher.

### Where is the furthest you have posted a painting?

Many of my buyers are from the United States, but I have also sent paintings as far as Canada and Japan.

### How many daily paintings have you made so far?

I've photographed all my paintings since I started my blog and there are more than 800 in the folder, but that doesn't



**"I WANTED TO GROW AS AN ARTIST, BE LESS ILLUSTRATIVE AND MORE CONTEMPORARY. THE CONCEPT OF DAILY PAINTING SPOKE TO ME"**

include rejected ones. My paintings come in many sizes – the smallest are 15cm square.

### What has been the biggest lesson you've learned from painting regularly on a small scale?

I have learned to simplify, to work with shapes and colours. The use of contrast and values are especially important. I often ask myself "What if...?" and take that with me to the next painting. The previous painting usually inspires the next one.

### To what extent has your style developed as a result of the daily painting?

I am painting a lot faster now; I am expressing myself and making every brushstroke count. Daily painting also brought some playfulness to my art. It brought out my personality and took things to the next level.

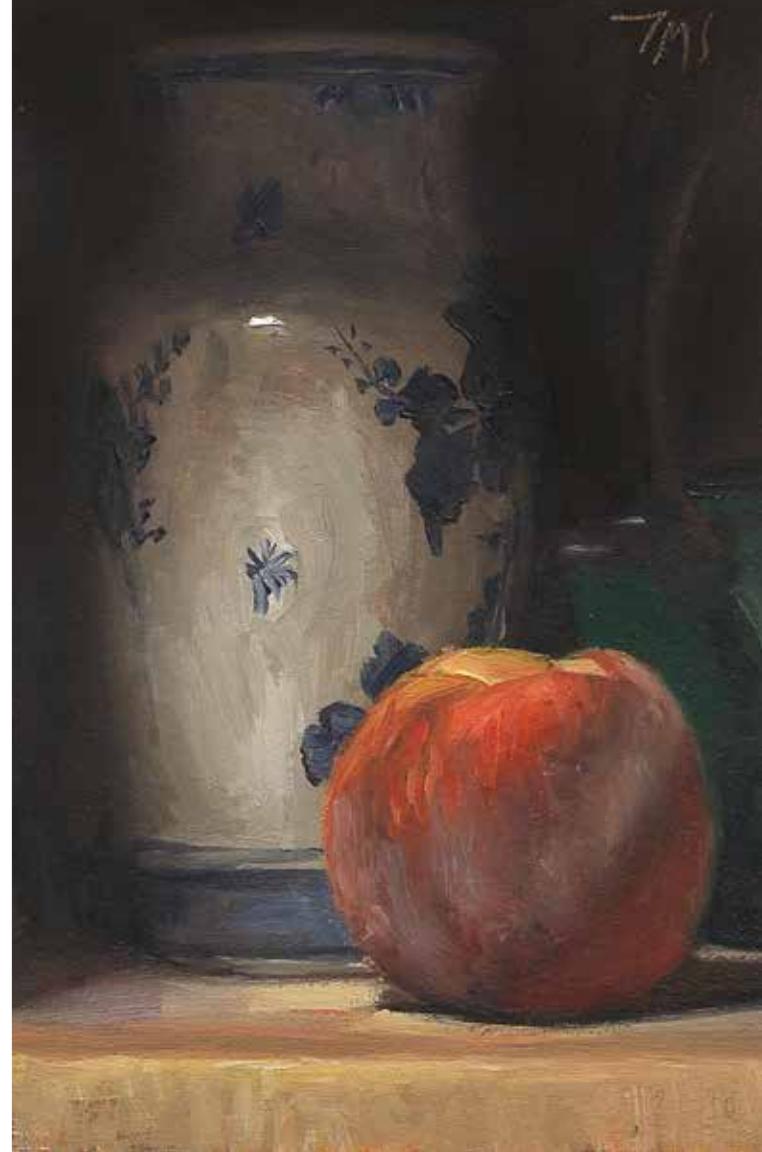
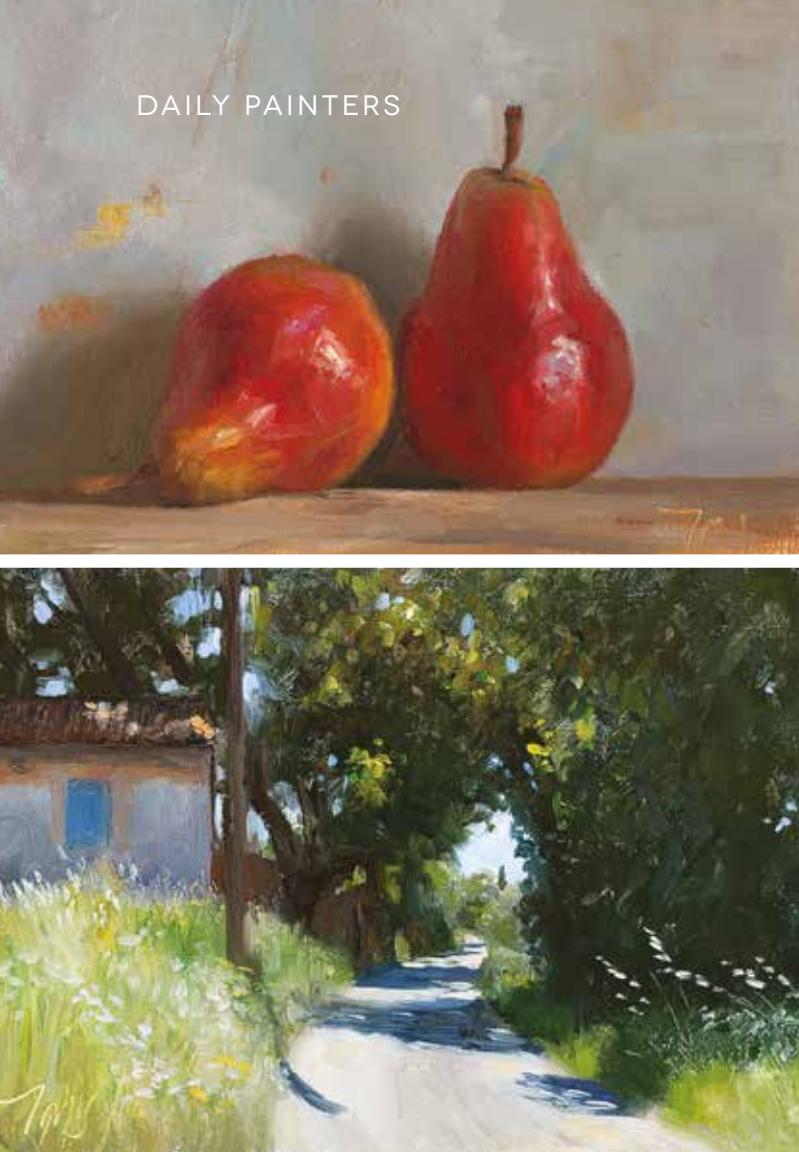
### You must have to be quite conscious of not repeating yourself. Is that an issue?

I do get stuck sometimes. I can usually stay with a theme or motif as long as I feel that I am bringing something new to it. When I feel that I am just going through the motions, then I know it is time to move on to something new.

If I get stuck, I try different compositions and colours within a theme. Sometimes I do challenges that are found on the Internet. On the Daily Paintworks website there is a new challenge every weekend. These challenges can push you outside your comfort zone and give you new ideas and directions by just trying them out.

[www.rogerakesson.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.rogerakesson.blogspot.co.uk)





## JULIAN MERROW-SMITH

From his home studio in the south of France, this British artist has been a daily painter for almost 11 years

You credit Duane Keiser's *A Painting A Day* blog with starting you on this journey. What was it about his approach that appealed to your way of working?

I was fortunate enough to be an early adopter of the Internet, having put up my first website, [www.stillives.com](http://www.stillives.com), in 1998. Through this I'd developed an interest in web standards and blogging. Separately I was painting small oils which I found, being easily portable, sold rather well to visitors to the French village in which I lived.

So when I first saw Duane's blog, I immediately saw the possibilities: a way of keeping in contact with buyers, a way to present my own work to the public and a way to sell directly without the need for a gallery. I got my blog up and running within about four weeks of seeing his.

### Have you ever contacted Duane?

Yes, I emailed him early on. I offered to buy a piece of his and he responded by suggesting we swap paintings. We have kept in contact and talk occasionally.

From the very start I saw the possibility of painting everyday. The model was perfectly suited to my way of painting and I had the technical knowledge to build it. My wife and I joked a lot at the time about the Kevin Costner film, *Field of Dreams*, which has the famous line, "If you build it, he will come". I don't think she really believed me.

CLOCKWISE FROM  
TOP LEFT *Two Red Pears*, oil on board, 21x16cm; *Still Life with Delft Vase, Peach and Japanese Tea Pot*, oil on gessoed card, 13x19cm; *Road Past the Cabanon*, oil on gessoed card, 18x13cm.  
All paintings by Julian Merrow-Smith

### In terms of technique, what has been the best part of the daily painting experience?

Being self-taught, I've devoured books and searched the Internet for examples of work or approaches to painting that would help expand my technical skills. If I discover something that I might want to add to my arsenal of techniques, or even something outside of painting like the way a film is framed, I can use it in a pretty immediate way.

### With more than 2,300 daily paintings under your belt, you must be quite conscious of avoiding repetition. Do you have any tips that might help other artists in this respect?

There is nothing wrong with repeating yourself – it's pretty much a necessity when you've been doing a painting a day for 10 years. The important thing is not to repeat yourself mechanically. Things tend to come round seasonally so I

may well have a totally different approach to a subject a year later too.

**"MY WIFE AND I JOKED THAT A DAILY PAINTING BLOG WAS LIKE THAT LINE IN *FIELD OF DREAMS*: 'IF YOU BUILD IT, HE WILL COME'"**

### Are you ever tempted to spend more than just a day on a painting?

I spent a couple of hours today working on a large still life that will take a week to finish, but I still make time to paint a daily as well. The regime suits my temperament, but I still dream of painting without time or size constraints – or the necessity to sell! [www.shiftinglight.com](http://www.shiftinglight.com)

## RITA KIRKMAN

**This signature member of the Pastel Society of America has been creating paintings every day since 2001**

### **When did you make your first 'daily painting'?**

I've been improving my own artwork since 2002, but frequent small paintings have been a habit for me ever since taking a workshop with Carol Marine in 2011.

### **In terms of technique, what has been the biggest lesson you've learned from painting regularly on a small scale?**

An interesting thing happens when one chooses a particular subject to develop into a series. Over time, the painting process becomes less about the subject and more about technique. When one becomes so familiar with a subject, the subject itself becomes unimportant and the artist is freer to experiment with artistic elements such as composition, colour, light, value and so on. This, for me, is when an artist truly improves his or her craft.

### **Are there any particular opportunities that have resulted from your daily painting?**

A big part of the daily painting effort is posting online every day. I've found that the blog posting and social media marketing have been a goldmine, not just for sales, but for promotion of my public identity as an artist. I've made friends and contacts throughout the art world from posting frequently and becoming recognised on Facebook.

### **Do certain subjects lend themselves to daily painting?**

Simple is better. Mine are usually single-subject portraits (animal or human) or simple landscape compositions – something that might break down in a thumbnail sketch to three or four basic shapes. In fact, this is a good rule for paintings of all sizes.

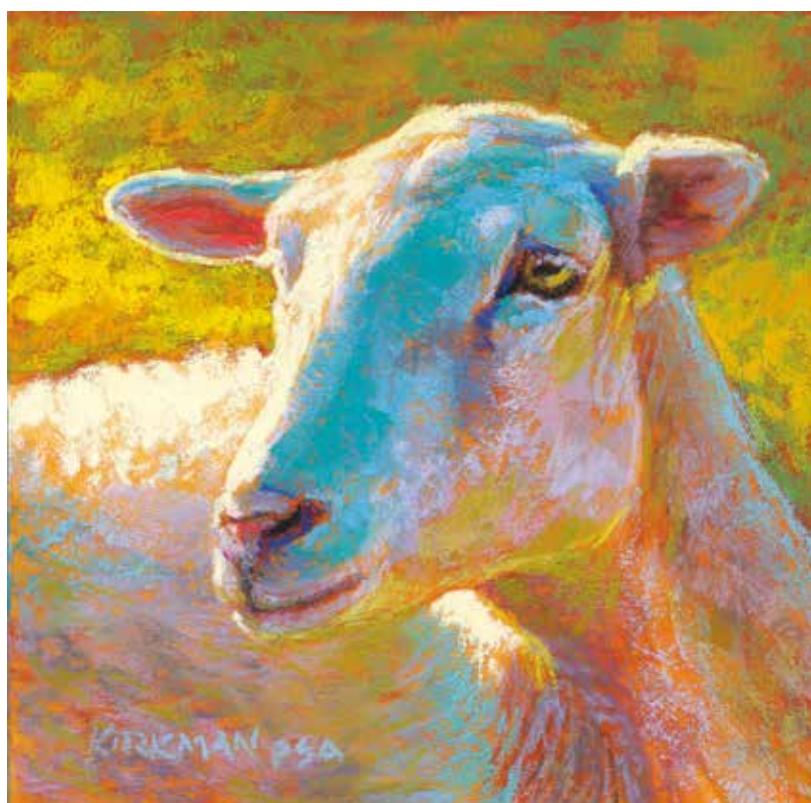
ABOVE *Aileen in Blue*, pastel, 20x15cm  
BELOW *Daffodil*, pastel, 15x15cm.  
Both paintings by Rita Kirkman



### **If someone was considering beginning a daily painting blog, what is the one piece of advice you would give?**

The most important piece of advice for anyone wanting to become a daily painter is what the artist Sara Eystone told us in one of her workshops, which is, "First you have to do the work". In other words, you must carve out the time each day to paint or draw. She told us to write down a list of everything that is immovable in your daily routine (job, school, appointments and so on) and then put 'studio' or 'painting time' in everywhere else – actually write it down and stick to it like a job. It will be difficult and you'll miss a lot of days, but when you do it, it feels so good! Painting is where the joy is. There's a lot more involved with making a career out of art, but first one must create the art.

[www.ritakirkman.com](http://www.ritakirkman.com)



## PORTFOLIO PLUS

Keen to start 'daily painting' right away but can't face the hassle of setting up your own website?

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10 MINUTES WITH...

# NERINE TASSIE

THE NEWLY-CROWNED SKY ARTS LANDSCAPE ARTIST OF THE YEAR REVEALS THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF PAINTING IN FRONT OF THE CAMERAS AND JUDGES.  
INTERVIEW: JENNY WHITE. PHOTO: ANDREA SOUTHAM

#### What made you enter the *Landscape Artist of the Year*?

I am a secondary school art teacher as well as an artist. It was a busy time of the school year and I hadn't painted as much as I would want to. I felt that entering the show would be a jumpstart and motivate me to paint more.

#### Was taking part in the show everything you expected?

I didn't know what to expect! I've never done anything like it before so it was completely surreal. Being timed while painting was very different and, as I work in layers, I would usually have had a lot more drying time so I had to consider practicalities with the materials. I found the whole experience really exciting: the intensity of the day carries you through, and I really enjoyed painting with other artists.

#### Which work were you most pleased with during the show?

I was surprising myself at each stage, but I was most pleased with the commissioned piece for the final because I had more thinking time for that and was able to use techniques I would usually use.

I feel like my art matured during the series. It's given me more focus – I'm using colours in a different way and exploring a lighter range of tones. I'm using the materials more sensitively and thinking about composition more intricately. That's everything I could have wished for.

#### Who or what are your greatest sources of inspiration?

I don't take direct influences from anyone, but I love the texture and scale of Anselm Kiefer's work, and I admire Gerhard Richter for his use of materials and the way his style is always developing.

In terms of the things that inspire me, it's mostly seascapes and dark woodlands. I live in Dysart, a village on the Scottish coast about 40 minutes drive from St Andrews, so the sea is very accessible. I love the fact that it is raw and ever changing, and I love the potential for exploring light, textures and forms in the waves and local woodland.

#### Why do you enjoy painting landscapes?

My love of working with different materials lends itself to exploring textures and colours in nature without creating something purely representational. However, I have gradually moved to a less abstracted way of working.

#### What medium do you work in?

I use a mix of media. I spend quite a bit of time building base layers up, working in enamels, shellac and acrylic and working on top of these in oils.

Being in Scotland, the weather limits how much time you can spend outside, so I take a lot of photographs and make preparatory sketches to get colours and tones. Back in the studio, I spend a lot of time looking at composition and working with Photoshop to get the composition right before I start painting.

#### Did the show's challenges suit your way of working?

When I entered the competition I didn't realise we would be painting National Trust properties. Every heat involved some kind of manmade structure, but it's not in my style to create a representational painting of a building so instead I tried to explore the linear aspects of the structure and the compositional placement of it. It helped that we were allowed

to interpret the scene however we chose.

Your prize was a £10,000 commission to paint at Flatford, Suffolk, where John Constable painted so many of his famous works. How was that experience?

I knew I didn't want to recreate [Constable's 1821 masterpiece] *The Hay Wain*, but I spent time in the Flatford area really getting to know Constable's work and the area. I wanted to capture the atmosphere of Flatford: I tend to take elements of different landmarks, so the composition becomes almost imagined. It was beautiful countryside, the light was fantastic and the colours were amazing. I tried to immerse myself in all that.

**“I FEEL LIKE MY ART MATURED DURING THE *LANDSCAPE ARTIST OF THE YEAR* SERIES... I'M USING COLOURS IN A DIFFERENT WAY”**

#### What's next for you?

Cass Art gave me £1,000 for materials and I was really excited about that. I've never painted so much since I was at art college and it's become a real focus again. I will try to keep developing my practice with the hope of having a couple of solo shows and getting my work in more exhibitions. I'm a part-time teacher now and that means I have more time to paint, which I'm really looking forward to. The entire series of *Landscape Artist of the Year* is available to watch via Sky On Demand. [www.nerinetassie.com](http://www.nerinetassie.com)



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# Daniel Smith competition



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A connoisseur's choice in the US for many years, Daniel Smith has recently established itself as the watercolour brand of choice for leading British artists too. *Artists & Illustrators* contributor Alvaro Castagnet is just one of many recent converts. "I like Daniel Smith watercolour paints for their excellent quality and deep chromatic intensity," he says. "The hues blend very well, are luminous, have good sedimentary traits and are great for creating paintings that make an expressionistic, gutsy statement!"

Daniel Smith Extra Fine Watercolours are available in more than 200 colours, including the PrimaTek range of authentic mineral pigments. A selection of 88 colours is also now available in smaller, affordable 5ml tubes, perfect for sampling new pigments or putting the finishing touches to your latest

masterpiece. To find out more about Daniel Smith products or find your nearest stockist, visit [www.premiumartbrands.com](http://www.premiumartbrands.com)

## THE PRIZE

One lucky reader chosen at random from the prize draw will receive the entire range of Daniel Smith 5ml watercolour tubes – 88 colours in total worth £588.13.

In addition to this, 50 runners-up will receive a Try-It sheet (worth £9.99 each), which includes dots of all 88 watercolours for you to sample.

## HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, enter online at [www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/competitions](http://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/competitions) by 2 February 2016.

Alternatively, fill in the prize draw form and

return it to: **Daniel Smith Prize Draw, Artists & Illustrators, Chelsea Magazine Company Ltd., Jubilee House, 2 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TQ**

Terms and conditions apply. For full details, please visit [www.chelseamagazines.com/terms](http://www.chelseamagazines.com/terms)

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# JANUARY

TIPS • ADVICE • IDEAS



## THE CAMPAIGN FOR CADMIUM

GREAT NEWS! THE PROPOSED EU BAN OF CADMIUM-BASED PAINTS HAS BEEN OVERTURNED, AS **MICHAEL CRAINE** OF SPECTRUM PAINTS REVEALS

### WHAT WAS BEING PROPOSED?

The European Chemical Agency (ECHA) responded to a Scandinavian request that attempted to reduce the quantity of cadmium batteries sent to landfill waste across Europe. Alarmingly the proposed legislation made no allowance for the entirely safe cadmium compounds used in artists' paints and, if successfully adopted, would have seen cadmium banned from use by European paint makers. Without concerted and urgent effort, artists would have been deprived of the vibrant yellows, reds and oranges that have formed an essential part of the professional palette since the 1840s.

### WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

Spectrum Paints set about raising awareness and speaking with the EU through the paint maker's trade organisation CEPE. *Artists & Illustrators* was an early convert and joined the campaign to spread the word and encourage individual artists to use the online facility to contact the ECHA with their views. We began to get a growing sense that the strength of our argument might win through. As a result of the publicity in *Artists & Illustrators* and further blogging by enthusiasts and supporters, the story went global. We were contacted by British

broadsheet newspapers, the story made it onto BBC Radio 4 and the campaign appeared in media in the USA, South Africa and Australia.

### WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?

The ECHA was impressed with the reasonable, informed and strongly held views of the art world that pigments containing cadmium sulphate are perfectly safe, perfectly strong, wonderfully lightfast and entirely unique. Whilst we discussed the technical case for cadmium pigments, many artists were passionately able to stress the economic and artistic importance of cadmiums.

### IS THIS JUST A TEMPORARY REPRIEVE?

This is more than a reprieve. The ECHA recognised our case and acknowledged the substance of our arguments. This astonishing collaboration has taken up a great deal of time over the last two years, but it was worth it. Not only is the change of heart over cadmium a joyous occasion, the fact that the artist fraternity was recognised as a community in its own right is an exciting development and one that should help us protect our mutual interests in the future too. So congratulations and sincere thanks all round!

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2016

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2. Joanne B. Thomas	July 1st
3. Keiko Tanabe	July 10th
4. Eugen Chisnican	July 31st
5. Jane Minter	Sept 11th

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Detail from an Original by Ceri Auckland Davies

## DID YOU KNOW?

JOHANNES VERMEER, GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING, C. 1665, MURITSHUIS, THE HAGUE



Indian Yellow pigment was originally made from the urine of cattle fed only on mango leaves and water! Johannes Vermeer apparently used the colour extensively in his masterpiece, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, which is on permanent display at the Mauritshuis in The Hague.

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

*Painting Self-Portraits*

Andrew and Paul James

Unsurprisingly for a book written by identical twins, the question of identity is addressed in this engrossing book, which mixes academic context with practical painting advice. The purpose of self-portraiture is questioned in lively conversational essays, while the extended demonstrations show you how it is done. **Crowood Press, £14.99**

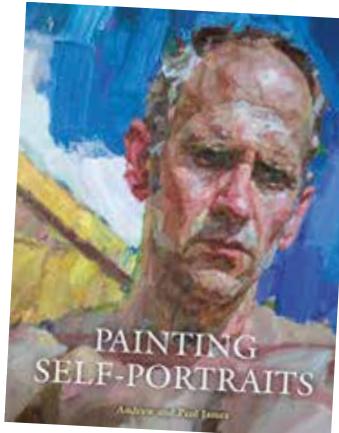


PHOTO: SIMONA EUGSTER, LICENSED UNDER CC BY-SA 3.0 VIA COMMONS



**WHAT IS... RABBIT-SKIN GLUE?** Rabbit-skin glue is a refined collagen made from the hides of rabbits. It is traditionally used to 'size' a canvas or wood panel for oil painting. Applying a layer or two of the glue prior to adding a ground or gesso will seal the fabric or wood and prevent excessive amounts of pigment soaking in and making the colours appear duller.

HOW TO DRAW  
REFLECTIVE OBJECTSJAKE SPICER TAKES A SHINE  
TO A SIMPLE STILL LIFE

## 1 Constructed shapes

First, make the form your focus. Use simple shapes to help you construct the drawing.

## TOP TIP

Reflective surfaces are tricky to draw so tackle one aspect at a time!



## 2 Outline the object

Next, look to the boundary line around your subject. Use the shapes of the negative space around it to help you see the edge of the subject objectively.



## 3 Mark the reflections

When you are ready to start drawing the reflective surface, don't draw what you see reflected; simply draw the jigsaw puzzle of light and dark shapes.



## 4 Establish mid-tones

Add tone with clear, confident marks. As a rule the majority is mid-tone, whereas the darkest darks and brightest lights making up less than 10%.



## 5 Deepen the contours

Add the final tones and consider how the direction of your marks can help to contour the surface of the subject and use an eraser to pick out any highlights.



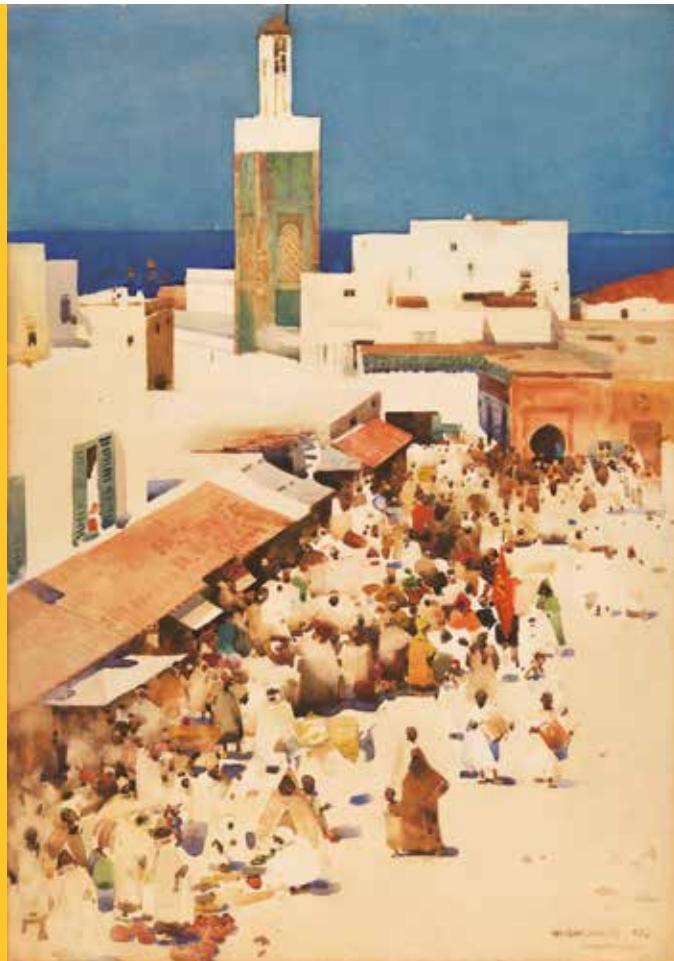
Jake's new book, *DRAW*, is published by Ilex Press, RRP £17.99. [www.jakespicerart.co.uk](http://www.jakespicerart.co.uk)

**MASTER TIPS**

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**Taken from Arthur Melville: Adventures in Colour, National Galleries Scotland, RRP £18.95. [www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org)**



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**SKETCHING WITH BIRO**

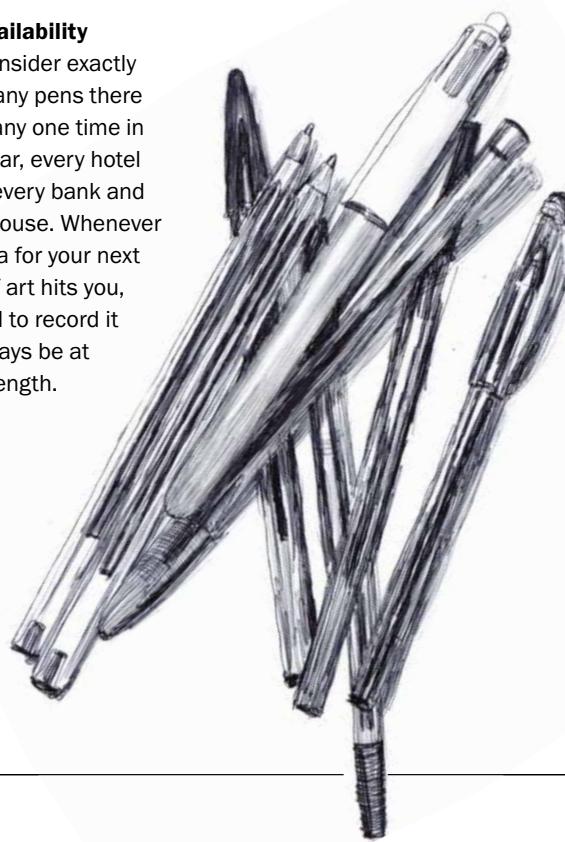
MATT ROTA EXPLAINS WHY THE HUMBLE BALLPOINT PEN IS THE MOST UNDERAPPRECIATED DRAWING UTENSIL OF THE LAST 100 YEARS

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**2 Availability**

Consider exactly how many pens there are at any one time in every bar, every hotel room, every bank and every house. Whenever the idea for your next work of art hits you, the tool to record it will always be at arm's length.



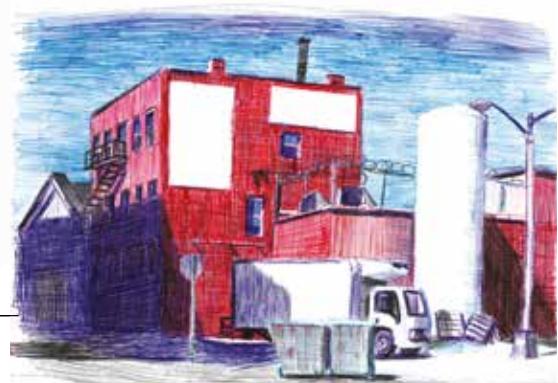
Matt's new book, *The Art of Ballpoint*, is published by Rockport, RRP £15.99. [www.mattrotasart.com](http://www.mattrotasart.com)

**3 Detail**

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# Fantastical LANDSCAPES

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**MARK HARRISON** SHOWS HOW TO CREATE AN IMAGINARY SCENE IN A DOZEN SIMPLE STEPS

For this month's masterclass, I wanted to paint something evocative and mysterious that I could base on a simple colour combination. I settled on a moonlit scene in the tradition of the Orientalist painters of the Victorian age, taking a little inspiration from Edmund Dulac and Maxfield Parrish's illustrations for *The Arabian Nights* from 1907 and 1909 respectively. Even my painting's title – *The Departure of the Bash Kadin* – was meant to be typical of that period.

The Bash Kadin was the first wife of the Sultan and I have implied some narrative to the picture by having her on a boat leaving the palace on a moonlit night. Is she fleeing from an evil tyrant or running a secret errand? The viewer can decide.

I chose to keep the painting to a single complementary colour axis. In other words, the palette is entirely based around two complementary colours: greenish blues and

reddish oranges. Choosing a limited palette is a good strategy for creating paintings that are rich in colour yet never gaudy.

The lighting and setting came from my imagination, but the palace and village were based on old Victorian-era postcard of the Middle East and some photos I had taken in Egypt. I wanted a magical atmosphere with the palace and landscape illuminated by the moon, even though the moon itself can only be seen in the river's reflection.

Despite being based on particular references, there is nowhere in the world that actually looks like this, the architecture being an amalgam of Egyptian, Central Asian and Moghul influences with something of a Hollywood feel. In short, it is a Western imagining of Eastern subject matter, the mosque-like architecture acting as a substitute for a palace in the Romantic tradition of *The Arabian Nights*.

[www.paintingsbymarkharrison.com](http://www.paintingsbymarkharrison.com)

## MARK'S TOOLS

### • OILS

Lead Tin Yellow Lemon, Permanent Orange, Emerald Green, Phthalocyanine Turquoise, Phthalocyanine Blue, Phthalocyanine Green, Naples Yellow, Burnt Sienna and Prussian Blue, all Michael Harding Artists' Oil Colours; Zinc White, Titanium White, Winsor Green (Phthalo), Manganese Blue Hue and Winsor Violet, all Winsor & Newton oil paint

### • BRUSHES

Omega 70 Astuccino bristle, size 24; Purdy XL Sprig Elite, 2"; Winsor & Newton flat, size 8; Pro Arte Acrylix Series 202 rounds, sizes 1 and 6; ProArte Acrylix Series 204 flats, sizes 1/8", 1/4" and 1/2"; Daler-Rowney Bristlewhite Series B48 long flats, size 1

### • CANVAS

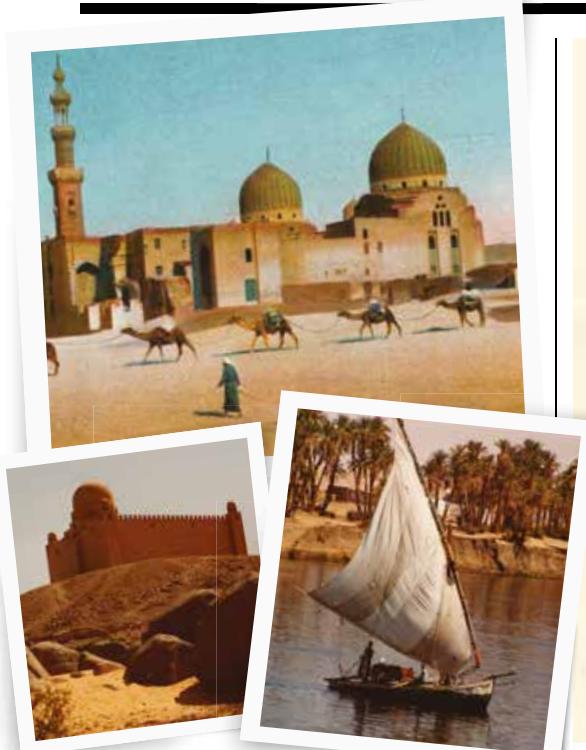
Winsor & Newton Artists' Canvas, 50x50cm

### • PALETTE KNIFE

### • LIQUIN

### • LUKAS OIL MEDIUM 5

### • TURPENTINE



### 1 COLLECT REFERENCES

Here you can see some of the references I chose. The palace architecture was based on a postcard of a mosque in Cairo that I redrew more in the style of a central Asian building and painted as if it was white stone, like the Taj Mahal, so it would glow in the moonlight. I also used several photos of Egypt, including an image of the Mausoleum of Aga Khan.



### 2 DEVELOP A DESIGN

The basic design for the painting was worked out in my sketchbook via a series of thumbnails. Working quickly, roughly and small is a good way to test out ideas. I was already thinking of possible titles as I find that a good title helps to fix my mind on what I am trying to achieve in terms of mood and atmosphere.



### 3 DRAW AND REVISE

I drew out the composition using a small bristle brush and a Burnt Sienna and Winsor Violet mix thinned with Liquin. Any incorrect areas were scrubbed out with a rag dipped in turps. I find this much easier on canvas rather than board, which has a relatively slippery surface – I also prefer the way that paint sits on a canvas or linen surface too. >



#### 4 ESTABLISH TONES

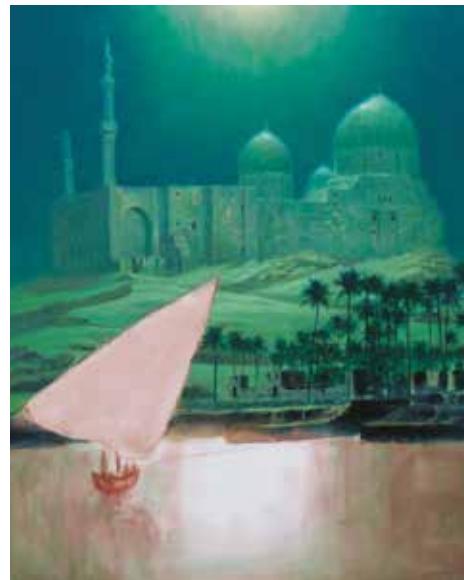
I applied a tonal underpainting with a rag and the same turps-thinned mix of Burnt Sienna and Winsor Violet. At this stage, I still hadn't decided on the colour scheme but this tonal underpainting allowed me to postpone that decision until the next session. If you are ever unsure about what to do next, look at it afresh the next day rather than ploughing ahead unthinkingly.

**Top tip**  
TRY TO PLACE  
COMPLEMENTARY  
COLOURS NEXT TO  
ONE ANOTHER TO  
MAKE THEM 'POP'



#### 5 BUILD THE COLOUR

On the next session, I settled upon the idea of using an intensely saturated yet limited palette of the complementaries. I painted the sky with a Zinc White, Emerald Green and Phthalocyanine Turquoise mix, knocked back slightly by a dash of Permanent Orange. I scumbled in a thin layer of the same mix over most of the picture, before roughly applying colour to the riverbank and trees.



#### 6 APPLY GLAZES

I painted a first glaze of Phthalocyanine Blue over the sky area, taking care to make it fade toward the unseen moon. The glaze was thinned with Liquin and applied with a flat brush, before stippling the surface with a dry Omega 70 Astuccino brush. I painted the architecture with scumbles of bluish greens, taking care to leave the underpainting showing in places for depth and variety.

#### 7 FILL THE MID-TONES

Another glaze of Phthalocyanine Blue was applied to the sky and a small amount of Lead Tin Yellow Lemon to the moonlight. I wanted the building to emerge out of the moonlit night so, aside from the windows, very few areas were darker than the sky. The sand was also mid-toned so that the dark values of the trees and riverbank stood out and helped create a shimmering effect.

#### 8 PICK OUT HIGHLIGHTS

After another sky glaze, finishing touches were made to the building, including some highlights on the domes. When painting from the imagination, shadows and highlights must be placed correctly to make the subject look plausible. I finished off the lighter desert areas and made a start on the riverside village and trees. For added richness, I used pure Phthalocyanine Green for the palm trees.



### 9 ENRICH THE PALETTE

With one more glaze of Phthalocyanine Blue in the top right and left corners, the sky was finished. A second layer of Phthalocyanine Green was painted over the palm trees so that they were dark green, rather than just black. This helps to heighten the richness of colour in the whole painting. I then worked on the village buildings with a layer of Prussian Blue mixed with a bit of Permanent Orange.



### 10 REFLECT ON PROGRESS

I went over the whole painting to adjust the values here, before finishing off the village, palm trees and riverbank. With those complete, I could now make a start on their reflections with a scumbled blue-green wash (it's not worth starting reflections any earlier until you know what is being reflected!). I also made a start on the boat and figures, which were reflected in the water.



### 11 CONTRAST FOR DEPTH

I painted the boat's sail using a mix of Burnt Sienna and Permanent Orange. Although not a strong colour itself, the juxtaposition with the green-blues of the rest of the painting makes it 'pop' and increases the feeling of depth. For the reflections, I dabbed on mixes of bluish greens and dark reddish oranges with a flat brush and then dragged the dry Purdy brush across them to soften the edges.

### 12 FINISHING TOUCHES

I softened the detail in the sail and added a bit of detail to the figures before proceeding to the final area of reflected moonlight. I dabbed in areas of Titanium White and Lead Tin Yellow Lemon with a flat brush and then dragged the Purdy brush across them as before. I wanted a warm flare of light coming off the moon's reflection so I painted in some misty oranges on the riverbank nearest to it.

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# CROSS-HATCHING

CLASSICAL ARTIST **LIZET DINGEMANS**  
ON THE SMARTER WAY TO SKETCH

In art theory (and in practice), the term 'values' refers to the relative lightness or darkness of an area. For example, the area closest to the light on a white object will have a higher (lighter) value than an area farther from the light or even in shadow, which would thus be a lower (darker) value.

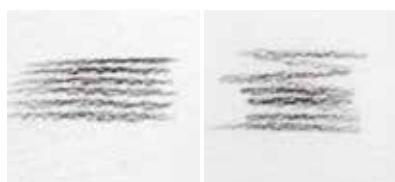
The best way to achieve a particular value is by building up to it by means of a series of thin parallel lines, known as 'hatching'. When these lines cross each other at angles, it is known as 'cross-hatching'.

The main advantages to cross-hatching rather than simply rubbing into the paper is that it is easier to control and adds direction to your drawing, therefore making it look more controlled too. The way the lines are angled can differ and this is called 'line direction'.

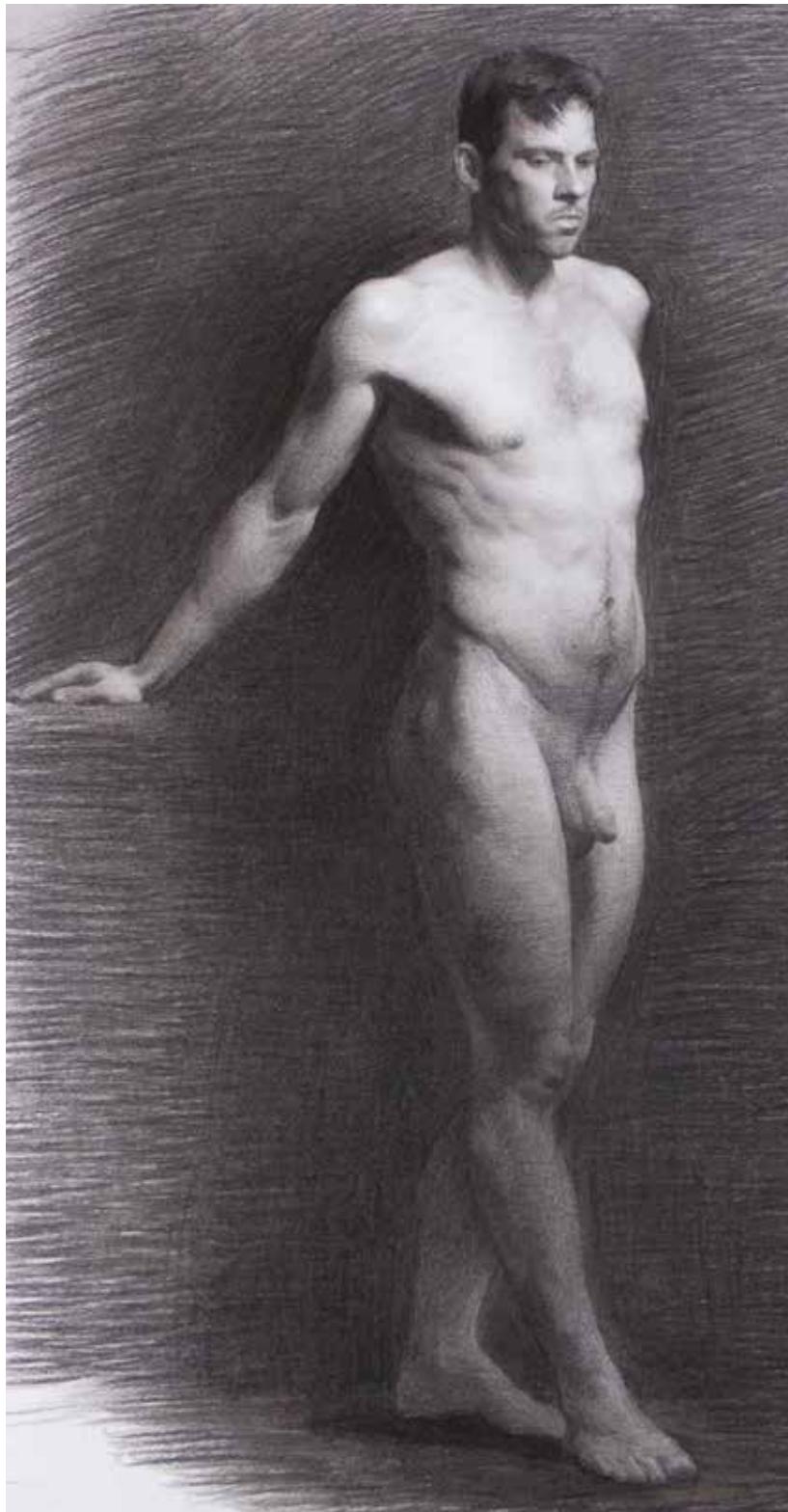
Start with a well-sharpened pencil or charcoal and lay down parallel strokes in the same direction. Be sure to lift your pencil or charcoal at the end of each stroke so the value is consistent throughout.

Add a second layer of strokes, working in a different direction. If you want the pencil marks to remain visible, stop at two layers. If you would rather have a flat value with no strokes visible, keep layering strokes in different directions, pressing very lightly with a very sharp pencil. If you find your value has become too dark, you can cut into it with a putty rubber kneaded to a point. When erasing, always follow the direction of the pencil strokes with the rubber to avoid spoiling the effect.

[www.lizetdingemans.com](http://www.lizetdingemans.com)



LEFT For a neater finish, lift your pencil after each stroke (far left), rather than drawing one continuous line



ABOVE Lizet Dingemans, *Henry*, charcoal on paper

LEFT Hold your pencil at the far end to create broader, more decisive marks



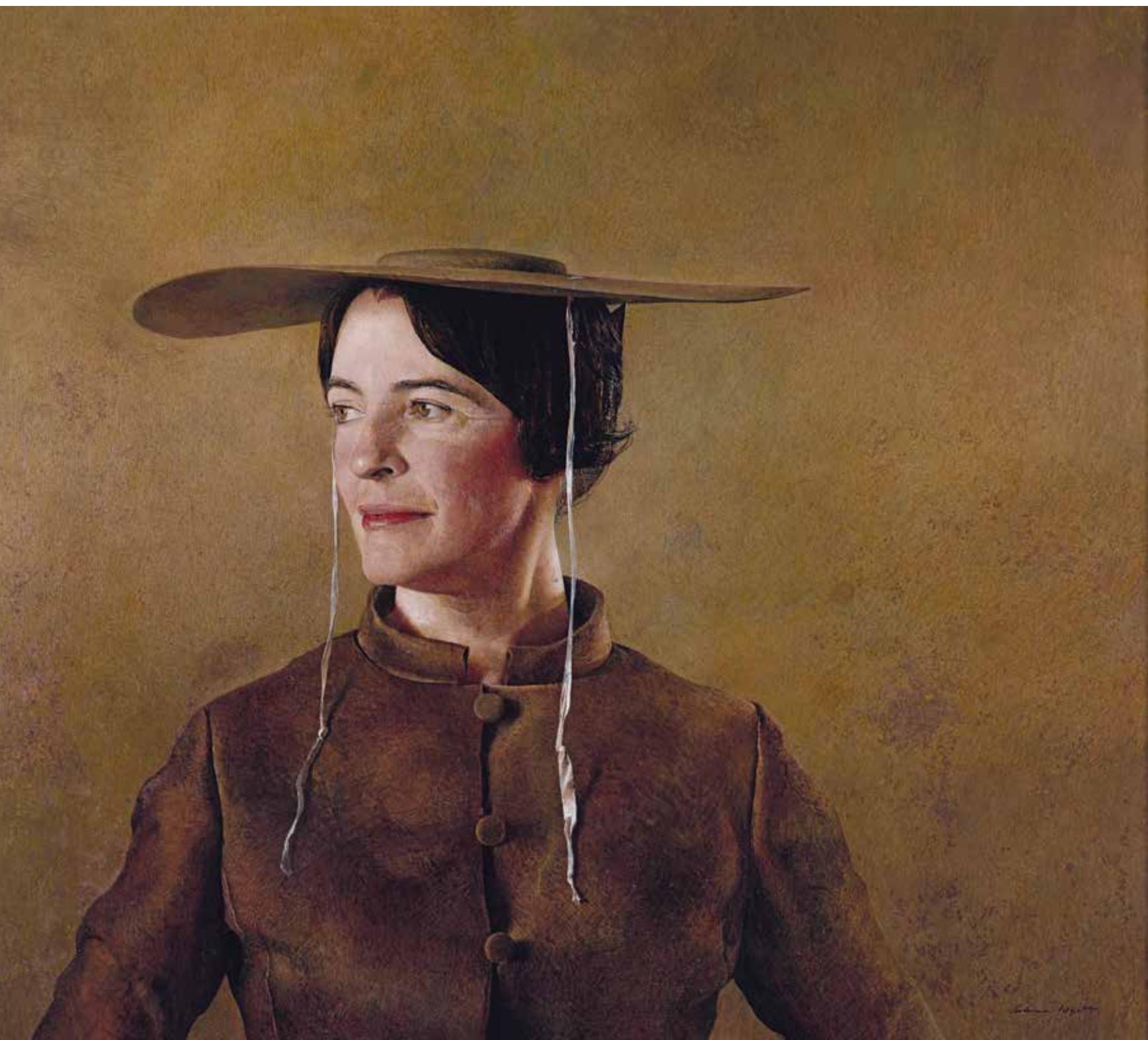
## CROSS-HATCH TIPS

- Make your strokes from your shoulder rather than your wrist. This ensures your strokes appear broad and decisive.
- Sharpen your pencil or charcoal stick to a fine point, preferably with a knife and sandpaper rather a cheap pencil sharpener.
- Avoid touching the paper with your hand. Smudged marks can be very hard to erase and may look messy.

MASTER TECHNIQUES

# ANDREW WYETH

TIMOTHY J STANDRING EXPLORES THE TECHNIQUES AND STUDIO PRACTICES OF THE LATE **ANDREW WYETH**, THE SON OF THE GREAT NC WYETH AND ONE OF THE 20TH CENTURY'S MOST CELEBRATED AMERICAN PAINTERS IN HIS OWN RIGHT



**A**t age 20, Andrew Wyeth became a celebrity. Within 24 hours of his first one-man show at the Macbeth Gallery in New York City, which opened on October 19, 1937, all 23 of his watercolours – most of which he had painted around Port Clyde, Maine – had sold. Reminiscent of Winslow Homer's watercolours, these works, with their explosive temperament and execution, communicated Andrew's irrepressible desire to paint. He had internalised the verve and brio of these sheets so entirely that he painted another one from memory more than a year later, when he gave a watercolour lesson to a group of women assembled at the Howard Pyle Studio in Wilmington, Delaware.

His urge to lay down pigments in a variety of manners, as well as to overcome the challenges that certain subjects presented, found its earliest expression in his pen and ink studies, produced with the same energetic touch as the Macbeth watercolours. His exuberant pen strokes of various thicknesses, slashed over a bevy of washes, may have gotten the better of him, however, as some of the marks lost their expressive or descriptive purpose. Finding a balance between expressing and telling – a hallmark of his art – is something he struggled with throughout his entire career. He evidently liked working in ink; it gave him a sense of control as he sought to describe subjects filled with challenging textures.

Already in these early works, Andrew proved that he could make drawings and paintings exceptionally compelling to gaze at because he understood the true potential of the various media he used. He loved to discuss the charged undercurrent of drawing with a pencil, in one instance saying that it "is a very emotional, very quick, very abrupt medium – the drawing begins to pull itself out of the blank piece of paper. You can't concoct that."

Possessing such technical finesse enabled him to discern when to add small matt touches of black chalk to accent and counterbalance the sheen of soft graphite, or when to lavish soft yet vigorous strokes over a hard graphite drawing. In studies for 1951's *Trodden Weed*, he is keenly adept at applying different gradations of graphite, from ivory black to a misty grey, to distinguish the dull from the shiny parts of the boot's leather. I thought that he had used a stump to articulate these surface transitions, but on closer inspection discovered that he created these effects with barely perceptible stippled touches of the lead against the surface. What other contemporary artists would have given him the impetus to draw in such a way, with such assuredness and vigour? Edward Hopper? Paul Cadmus? Peter Blume? But their agendas were different, and their drawings served other purposes. Andrew's were about his own artistic curiosity and ardour. Who else was pressing, turning, and twisting his pencil as if he were working a fencing foil across the surface of the paper?

Aware early of the exuberant side of his artistic nature, he sought to balance his conflicting artistic urges in graphite, pen and ink, and especially in his watercolours and drybrush drawings. "Watercolour perfectly expresses the free side of my nature... Watercolour shouldn't behave, it simply shouldn't. I work in drybrush when my emotion gets deep enough into a subject." He was particularly sensitive to how wet media react to the surfaces they are painted on, and he experimented with all sorts of papers,



**"I DO DOZENS AND DOZENS OF CAREFUL, PRECISE DRAWINGS, BUT WHEN I GET TO THE PAINTING, I NEVER LOOK AT THEM" – ANDREW WYETH**

seeking to marry the correct watercolour washes and brushwork to the character of their surfaces.

Andrew understood that cold-pressed watercolour paper, with its slight surface grain, allowed him to work vigorously with the pigments as he did with 1941's *Roaring Reef*. With such paper, he could produce scintillating and unexpected lines by scraping off more-opaque pigments applied over foundations of washes, all intended to express the surf churning between the encrusted rocks. In the middle of the foaming water, he left an area with a jagged edge, created by allowing the pigment to pool as the wash spread, moving by gravity or, most likely, by Andrew tilting the sheet of paper to influence the flow of the wash. At the lower right of the composition, he applied opaque passages of Burnt Sienna over Raw Umber, both on top of a pale Cerulean, to counterbalance the exciting passages in the middle of the composition. His last touches to the sheet produced delicate highlights by scraping off the top layer of pigment with flicks of his pocketknife's blade. Andrew succeeded in creating these effects brilliantly with a fickle medium, and these successes are what he wanted to share with his viewers.

Alternatively, he had to work with a less vigorous touch – and rapidly as well – when painting on hot-pressed paper, because its smooth surface tends to prevent the pigment from leaching into the paper's tooth and instead runs and dries quickly. Painting on such smooth surfaces is seductive because of the way the paint spreads and blends with other transparent or semi-transparent colours, but it fixes rapidly, and so once paint is placed on the paper, it becomes tricky to add other colours. Painting on a sheet with a rougher grain is more forgiving and allows for some painterly adjustments.

**OPPOSITE PAGE**  
*Maga's Daughter*, 1966, tempera on panel, 67.3x76.8cm  
**ABOVE** *String and Nails, Study for Maga's Daughter*, 1966, graphite on paper with string and nails, 30.5x34.3cm



© ANDREW WYETH, PRIVATE COLLECTION



Regardless of their paper surfaces, Andrew's watercolours demonstrate his ability to adjust treatment of a medium to exact a desired effect: how much pressure to apply to his brush when it touched the paper, what sort of strokes to apply, what degree of washes or opacities of pigment to lay down, and when and where to score the surface of the sheet. In the series leading up to 1960's *Young Bull*, Andrew's preliminary efforts were a function of his ability to sustain the core idea as he worked through technical details. If the flash of an idea dimmed, he would move on to another suite of works. Speaking of one of his first drybrush paintings, *Faraway*, he said that "a good drybrush to me is done over a very wet technique of washes," which "started out as a straight watercolour but then I got interested in the texture of a coon hat he was wearing and I kept working and working, shaping and moulding, if you will, with that dried-out brush and drying paint. I've done others after that, and they were an even drier technique. But what I am after is a mixture of straight watercolour with drybrush."

Despite his innate talent, Andrew worked incredibly hard to master control of all the variables of drawing and painting by producing sheet after sheet after sheet. Not everything, to his eyes, was worth keeping, and much ended up being tossed into an oil drum to be incinerated. Yet sheets survive that are so wildly exuberant and painterly that they must have been hugely appreciated by this artist, who was apprehensive to reveal that more private side of his artistic production. Such, I believe, is the case with a watercolour depicting patches of snow, all brilliantly mapped out initially with a series of transparent

washes that he then overlaid with passages of more opaque colours scored through to reveal the lighter colours underneath. Similar to his approach in his pen and ink drawings, he also incorporated the natural colour of the paper, left untouched (or masked) to play an integral part in the composition, as it suggests the zigzagging snow that is the focus of the untitled work. He experimented further on this sheet by using masking fluid for a horizontal passage across the upper part of the paper; the old masking substance has since oxidised into a coppery hue, an unexpected enhancement to the sheet.

Andrew was equally experimental when he began working in tempera: "I had many methods in the beginning. I even tried applying it with a palette knife. I tried painting as I did with watercolours, freely. I tried many things until I found out what the quality of that medium really meant to me," he said, adding, "but tempera is something that I can truly build. My temperas are very broadly painted in the beginning, then I tighten down on them."

He often first drew the rudiments of his compositions with black charcoal, and then, similar to his approach to drybrush paintings, laid the entire surface down with tempera washes and then began the meticulous process of adding a patchwork overlay using minuscule strokes of thicker viscosities of tempera. By varying the dilution of the pigment, Andrew was anticipating how he could activate the surface with brushwork that transitioned harmoniously from passage to passage.

Critics had already taken note of Andrew's expressive use of media in the early 1950s, when Aline Louchheim noted >

**ANDREW EXPERIMENTED WITH ALL SORTS OF PAPERS, SEEKING TO MARRY THE CORRECT WATERCOLOUR WASHES AND BRUSHWORK TO THE CHARACTER OF THEIR SURFACES**



**TOP LEFT** *Faraway*, 1952, drybrush on paper, 34.9x54.6cm  
**FAR LEFT** *Faraway Study*, 1952, graphite on paper, 35.2x54.6cm  
**LEFT** *Faraway Study*, 1952, watercolour on paper, 21.9x54.6cm

© ANDREW WYETH, PRIVATE COLLECTION



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that "advocates of avant-garde art are also champions of [Wyeth's] work because they see that what appears to be literal transcription is instead a highly selective means toward an intense, subjective and wholly 20th-century expression." Andrew was quite aware of the two sides of his artistic impulses, once saying to Thomas Hoving, "Why not have abstraction and the real, too? Combine the two, bring in the new with the traditional and you can't beat it. I believe, however, that I don't want to let the one take over the other. I try for an equal balance. If somehow I can, before I leave this earth, combine my absolutely mad freedom and excitement with truth then I will have done something."

Once he latched on to that "something", he produced a number of drawings and watercolours to sustain the moment locked up in his memory, working to internalise the vision in the mind's eye. This may explain why he said, "I do dozens and dozens of careful precise drawings, but when I get to the painting, I never look at them."

This may also have been the reason why he discontinued using tacks and string to form the squares that were

superimposed over a preliminary drawing for *Maga's Daughter*. He preferred to work up his compositions using other methods, such as simply letting them lie on the floor in a dishevelled manner near his painter's stool and easel, perhaps more for psychological purposes than as actual references. The successes achieved through his intensely emotional efforts served to remind him that his best works were in fact controlled accidents.

The constant trial and error was part of his game, one in which he was well aware of the limited success rate: "I do hundreds of them," he said, "and maybe two out of 30 will come off." He recognised an opportunity during the process of making an image: "In a drybrush and a watercolour sometimes a passage that looks like a mistake can be the precise making of a picture, because it will bring out maybe the transparency of a pure blue or gold, near the messiness that may be around it."

**This is an edited extract from *Wyeth: Andrew & Jamie in the Studio*, published by Denver Art Museum in association with Yale University Press, RRP £30. [www.yalebooks.co.uk](http://www.yalebooks.co.uk)**

**TOP LEFT** *Trotten Weed*, 1951, tempera on panel, 50.8x46.4cm



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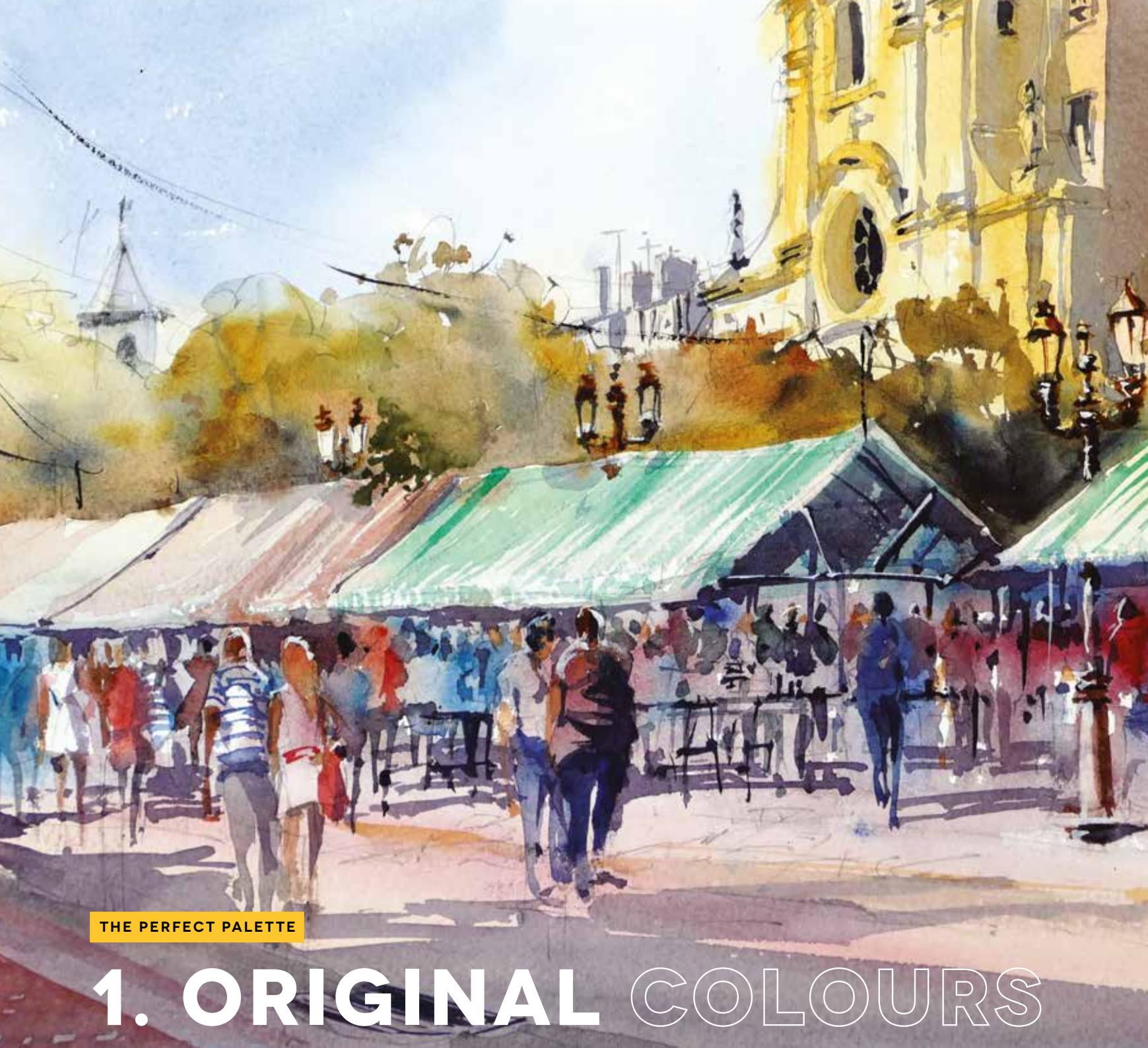
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THE PERFECT PALETTE

# 1. ORIGINAL COLOURS

IN THIS NEW FOUR-PART SERIES, MASTER WATERCOLOURIST **GRAHAME BOOTH** WILL TEST ALL THE MAJOR BRANDS TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR IDEAL BLEND OF PIGMENTS. HE BEGINS WITH A LOOK AT HIS CURRENT PALETTE AND THE KEY FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUYING PAINTS

When I started to paint I used the same palette of colour that my first watercolour teacher used. I don't recall thinking much about colour theory at the time, it was more a case of "if it works for him, it must be good enough for me". During his classes, I listened carefully to his description of the mixes and gradually I began to understand how his (and my) palette of colours

worked. More importantly I began to understand why his colours worked and, over time, I watched other painters and added some additional colours to get to the 12 that now comprise my palette.

My palette is essentially based on the traditional idea of a warm and cool version of each primary with additional colours added for variety or for particular needs. When thinking of

primaries, it is important to remember that mixing paint is very different from either mixing coloured light or the commercial printing of colour. Traditionally in painting, the primaries are considered to be red, yellow and blue – the three colours that can't be mixed from any others. If any two primaries are mixed this will give us the secondaries, orange, green and purple, and mixing all three primaries



together (or a secondary with the other primary) will give us a grey-black. This is all very well in theory but try mixing the primary yellow with secondary purple and I am fairly sure you won't think much of the grey-black that results. Clearly there are serious limitations to using only three colours. This is down to the fact that the colour of even the best quality pigments is far from 'pure' (in terms of colour bias and temperature), which is one reason why the idea of the two versions of each primary came about. Even then it isn't really possible to get purely warm and cool versions of all

*Nice Market, watercolour on Millford 300gsm NOT paper, 36x26cm*  
A busy subject like this allows a good range of colour – I used maybe six or seven colours from my usual palette (see page 60). I believe using a small number of basic colours to create a wide range of mixes is the best approach as it adds harmony to a painting. But do I have the right 12? Am I just using what I am familiar with? Are there colours available that will allow me to create mixes that may be more suited to my needs?

colours and so it makes sense to add a few 'specials' to fill the gaps. So am I really using the dozen paints that make up my perfect watercolour palette? On a good day when the painting is going well, they can feel as if they are the best 12 colours in the world, but on a bad day I am aware that there are colours out there that I have never tried that could easily perform a better job, or even just an easier one. Over the next four issues, I will be sampling the wares of some of the world's finest paint manufacturers in my effort to find (or confirm) my perfect watercolour palette. My plan is not to carry out an exhaustive scientific technical appraisal, but simply to paint. In doing so I will experience the practical properties that I believe to be important for watercolour painters: physical consistency, pigment concentration, opacity, granulation effects, the ability to create useful mixes with other colours, the differences between the same colour from different manufacturers, the ease of lifting out both wet and dried paint in a wash, and the ease of mixing washes from both fresh pigment and also from pigment that has been allowed to dry for a few weeks.

I want to discover the fewest number of paints that will allow me to mix the colours I need. I plan to be completely open minded. If the opacity or the staining properties of a colour don't actually affect its practical use then I won't allow it to concern me, but I will discount those paints whose lightfastness is not rated either excellent or very good (see box). There is such a huge range of lightfast pigments available today so I cannot understand why it would be necessary or desirable to use any other type.

My thanks go to the manufacturers and distributors of Daniel Smith, Daler-Rowney, MaimeriBlu, M.Graham & Co., QoR, Schmincke, Sennelier and

Winsor & Newton. Between the artists' watercolour ranges of these eight companies, I had a total of 856 pigments to choose from – tempting, sure, but too many to effectively trial.

On the assumption that my current palette shouldn't be too far away from the ideal balance, I have collected together broadly similar pigments from the different manufacturers. This will hopefully allow me to discover what differences there may be between them.

I have also selected some pigments from the colour charts that I had never used but that looked interesting and potentially useful, while also inviting the manufacturers to send me any pigments they felt I might enjoy. >

## LIGHTFASTNESS

Lightfastness is one quality we tend to forget when assessing colours, but it is important to pay attention to manufacturer's advice. To see for myself, I created swatches of various colours several years ago. I cut each of them in half, fixing one half to my south-facing attic window for two years and keeping the other half in a dark drawer. Below are the results for Alizarin Crimson (PR83) and Quinacridone Magenta (PR122). I know this is an extreme test but notice how dramatically the crimson has faded, whereas the more lightfast magenta is virtually unaltered. It begs the question: why use fugitive pigments? I now use Permanent Alizarin Crimson (PR206) in place of the traditional pigment as a result.

### ALIZARIN CRIMSON



Exposed to sunlight

Stored in darkness

### QUINACRIDONE MAGENTA



Exposed to sunlight

Stored in darkness

## GRAHAME'S CURRENT PALETTE

This is my existing selection of colours that has evolved over many years, although several of these – including French Ultramarine and Burnt Sienna – I have been using since I first started painting. I believe that with these 12 pigments I can mix any colour I may need, but am I right?

### PHTHALO GREEN

I used to use Viridian as one of my original colours but found Phthalo Green to be a less expensive alternative that did essentially the same job. This really is a hideous colour and I don't recall ever using it neat, but when mixed with Burnt Sienna it produces a beautiful range of summer and autumn greens. Mixing with French Ultramarine also gives a great sea green, while adding Permanent Alizarin Crimson gives a fresh dark tone that is perfect for a cold winter sky.

### PHTHALOCYANINE BLUE (GREEN SHADE)

This is a cold blue with which I have a bit of a love-hate relationship. It is extremely strong, so a little goes a long way, but this also makes it a difficult colour to balance. I mostly mix it with Permanent Alizarin Crimson for a perfect shadow colour. Mixing with Burnt Sienna gives an extremely dark green, useful for the darkest tree foliage. Ultimately, I suspect I could do without this colour – perhaps the tests will find me an alternative?

### COBALT BLUE

I have always used this colour for blue skies, but it can also be mixed with Raw Sienna for dull, distant greens. This is another colour I feel I could probably do without if I could find a better alternative for the skies – Phthalo Blue with a touch of Permanent Alizarin Crimson comes close but it isn't quite as good.

### FRENCH ULTRAMARINE

This is my warm blue and by far my most commonly used colour. It gives a huge range of greys and greens when mixed with Burnt Sienna or various yellows, respectively. I also use this with Brown Madder (for a shadow wash) and Permanent Alizarin Crimson (for lovely deep purples). Although a bright blue, it is never harsh and mixes well.

### PERMANENT ALIZARIN CRIMSON

A cool red replacement for traditional Alizarin Crimson, I find I use this colour more and more as it always creates good, clean mixes. More recently, I find myself seeking colours that are more versatile in mixes and yet retain a natural hue that is suited to the traditional subjects I paint.

### BROWN MADDER

This is a warm red and, while I could mix virtually the same colour with Burnt Sienna and Permanent Alizarin Crimson, it is handy to have it ready to go. I use Brown Madder primarily with French Ultramarine as a shadow wash, but it is also good for red-brick walls and autumn foliage. On the down side, Brown Madder doesn't mix well with other colours (aside from French Ultramarine) so I am hoping my tests might find something that will be more versatile.





### RAW SIENNA

This warm yellow is great for stone walls, sand and muted greens. A few years ago it would have been one of my essential colours, but I find myself using it less nowadays as I favour the brighter Quinacridone Gold, dulled with Burnt Sienna if necessary. I'm holding on to it for now because it always looks natural and I know I can dip in without worrying about creating anything garish.

### CADMIUM YELLOW

With a similar opacity to Cadmium Red, this warm yellow produces good greens with the blues. It is capable of overpainting darks, but will this be enough to warrant an inclusion in my newly-modified palette?

### QUINACRIDONE GOLD

This yellow is a fairly recent addition to my palette. It is a strange colour, appearing cool, not unlike Aureolin when diluted, yet warm like Raw Sienna when used in a more concentrated form. It produces beautiful clean and varied greens and appears natural enough to use directly, wet-in-wet when painting autumn foliage.

### AUREOLIN

My cool yellow, it creates lively yet believable grassy greens. This paint does darken slightly over time but not to a huge extent. On the other hand, if there is an alternative with no shift I would be keen to try it.

### BURNT SIENNA

My second most used paint, it is the basis for all my grey and earth colour mixes. It just seems so natural, rarely looking out of place, unlike some of the more powerful organic dyes. Another colour I couldn't imagine replacing.

### CADMIUM RED

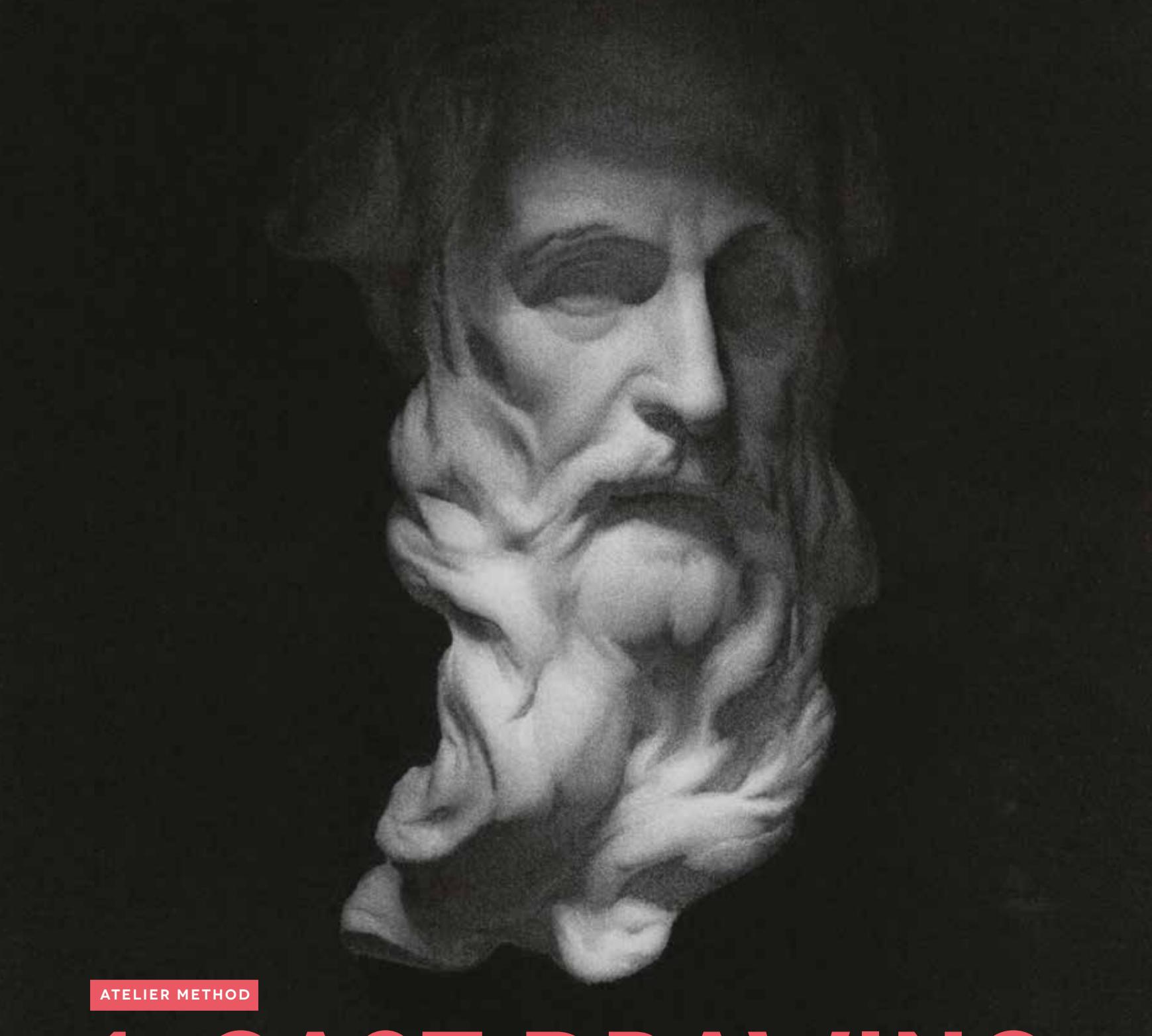
Another rich, warm red. The opacity of cadmium pigments is often cited as a reason for their limited usefulness and I duly accepted this advice, but I have found from experience that a wash of Cadmium Red creates beautiful warmth and I would challenge anyone to claim that it is any duller than a wash from a transparent colour. Where the opacity works well is for hints of red flowers placed directly on to a dark background. I could be drawn to a more transparent alternative, but I have yet to be convinced.

### GOUACHE

Controversial perhaps, but I am a big believer in using a white gouache for highlights – I feel the result is much fresher than carefully painting around them or using masking fluid. There are also some colours that I believe need white, such as a dusty pink for a rose needs this white in the mix: a red or rose diluted with water just isn't the same.

ILLUSTRATION: ANDREA TURVEY





ATELIER METHOD

# 1. CAST DRAWING

IN 19TH-CENTURY ART SCHOOLS, STUDENTS PRACTICED USEFUL EXERCISES TO QUICKLY IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS. IN OUR NEW SERIES, THE LONDON ATELIER OF REPRESENTATIONAL ART'S RADOSLAV TOPALOV INTRODUCES AN UPDATED SET OF CHALLENGES FOR YOU TO TRY

**H**ave you ever stood in a gallery, stared at works of the Old Masters and asked yourself: "How on earth did they do that?"

It is tempting to conclude that such paintings are the result of some exceptional, innate talent, but this is not entirely true. No

artist, alive or dead, was ever born with the ability to draw and paint. This ability is always the result of years of long, vigorous training and complete devotion to his or her craft.

In this series of articles, I want to give you a little taster of one of the key elements of classical art

training, an approach that has been preserved and taught for many, many years.

We will begin with cast drawing on white paper, an exercise that every new student should master if they hope to ever be able to convey a convincing sense of reality in their work.

## WHAT IS THE 'ATELIER METHOD'?

The atelier method is a system of teaching representational art that dates back to the 19th-century academies of fine art. Artists like John Singer Sargent and Pablo Picasso were known to have received this type of academic education. The programme for such academies consisted of a series of exercises that aimed to develop the student's eye for key building blocks such as proportion, value, line, colour, composition, gesture and so on. Each exercise introduces new elements of picture making to the student and increases in difficulty, while preparing him or her for the challenge of the next one.

The process begins by copying Bargue drawings (a series of figure drawings by French artist Charles Bargue first published as

lithographs in the 19th century), which introduces beginners to the materials and basic concepts of line and shapes, and culminates in complex figure, portrait and still life paintings. Students are allowed to progress to more complex exercises and subjects only once they have mastered the current one.

One of the key techniques associated with atelier training is the sight-size method. Sight-size is an easy way of setting up your working space and nothing more. Simply place your easel beside your chosen subject, take a few steps back and choose a vantage point. All observations should be made from this point (it can help to mark it on the floor in chalk or masking tape) and you should attempt to make the subject and the drawing appear the same size on a one-to-one scale from this vantage point.



## MATERIALS

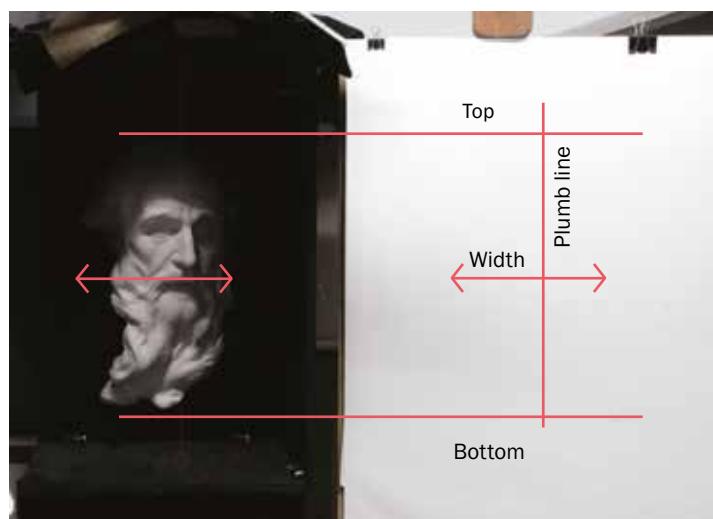
The materials required for the creation of a cast drawing need to be high quality, to be able to depict a number of values and achieve good finish. Nitram Charcoal is the only brand available at the moment that is flexible enough for our task. It is able to produce a great variety of values and is much sturdier than other types.

The best surface is Fabriano's Roma, a textured

cotton paper, which combines sturdiness with the ability to hold plenty of charcoal.

Mistakes are inevitable and a putty rubber is the best tool for correcting them. A shammy cloth can also be useful in the early stages – it erases charcoal with great ease and zero damage to the paper's surface.

Also consider a wooden skewer and a plumb line for measuring.



## 1 MEASURING

Measuring is among the most important skills to master. It is a great way of plotting the next mark and checking if what you have already drawn is correct.

Begin by establishing the top and bottom of the cast. Hold the skewer horizontally against the highest point of the cast and look at where it intersects the paper. Try to remember that spot and quickly mark it on the paper. Go back to your vantage point and measure again to see if the mark is placed on the paper correctly. Adjust as required and then measure the lowest point of the cast in the same way.

To make measuring easier, hang a plumb line directly in front of your cast. Draw that same line on your page – this will be your point of reference for measuring widths. The plumb line can also be used to help you measure where different parts of the cast should be placed in relation to it. I often make sure that my plumb line falls through the corner of an eye socket on a cast and use that spot to establish a 'true

point' on my drawing. I use this point to compare distances with every other part of the drawing. It limits the possibility of getting lost in my measurements. If a mark does not measure out with my true point, it must be wrong.

You can also use the skewer to determine the important angles on the cast. Hold the skewer against any diagonal on the cast and then position it against the page at the same angle, marking the line in place as you go. >



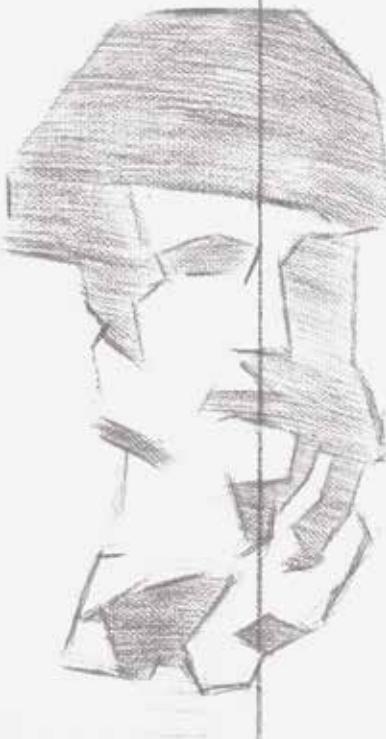
## 2 BLOCKING IN

Blocking in involves creating a very simplified representation of the subject that aims to establish the general proportions, angles and composition on the page. Limit yourself to using only straight lines for this stage. Unlike curves, straight lines have very obvious high and low points, which makes it a lot easier to determine whether they are the right length, angle and position.

Begin by placing just a few of the larger lines in order to

establish the general contour of the cast. After that, in the same simplified manner, block in some of the internal information in the form of simple shadow shapes. Apply a light, unified tone inside the shadow shapes.

In doing so, we have successfully divided our image into two planes, namely a shadow plane and a light plane. At this point, if the drawing is correct, you should be able to recognise a kind of posterised version of your cast on the page.



**BLOCKING IN INVOLVES CREATING A VERY SIMPLIFIED REPRESENTATION OF THE SUBJECT THAT AIMS TO ESTABLISH THE GENERAL PROPORTIONS, ANGLES AND COMPOSITION ON THE PAGE**

## 3 BACKGROUND AND KEY

Now is a good time to introduce the second element of your drawing: the background. A background is very important for a cast drawing because it often contains the darkest possible value. This value should be drawn as close to black as possible with the charcoal. That element of the drawing is called the 'key'.

Be mindful of the fact that, like any drawing material, charcoal has a limited value range, which is smaller than the full range observable in nature. This makes the key ever so important, as it will serve as reference for all the other values we put down.

By establishing the key as the darkest bit of the drawing, you are then able to relate all other values to it and avoid making any

of them as dark. If you don't follow that rule and relate all other tones to the key, you can risk disrupting the hierarchy of your value scheme and making your image appear flat.

The best places to look for a key are where the contour of the cast touches the background and also in any shadows that the cast throws on the backdrop. Depending on the composition, this darkest value normally bleeds into the cast at certain points. If you identify and draw the key at this early stage, you can take your first step towards connecting the cast with the background and making them work together.

In the later stages, this will provide for a nice naturalistic and atmospheric effect, giving the illusion that the cast is emerging from the background.



## 4 VALUES

After you have keyed the drawing, it's time to start looking for the next set of values. I usually opt for the shadows, which still fall into the category of 'dark' values, but will be just a little bit lighter than our key.

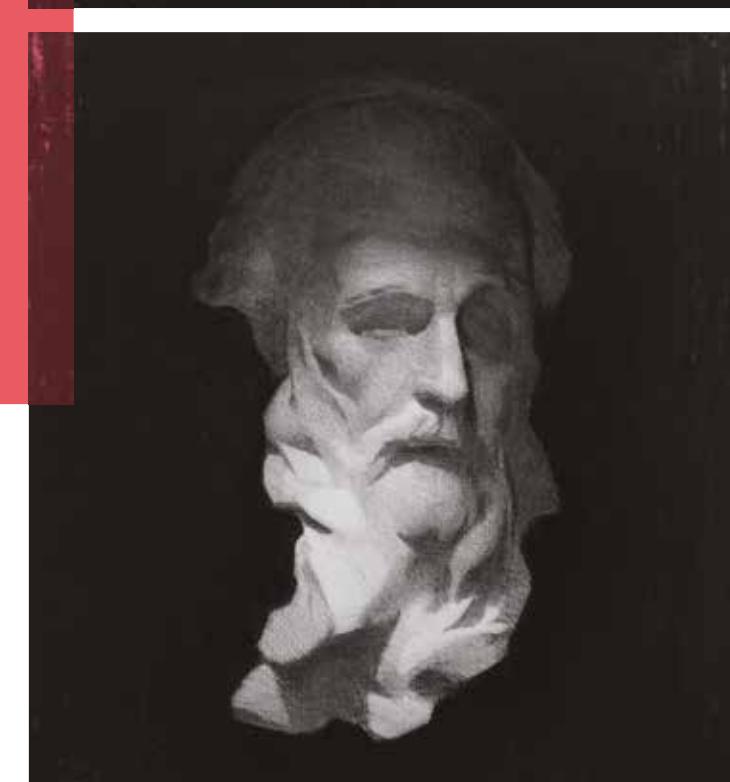
Bearing in mind that the range of drawn values is limited compared to nature, aim to keep the shadow values quite compressed. In other words, try to ignore any reflected light or variation of tone within them for the time being. By doing this, you are preserving more of the available value range for modelling the form in the light. Failure to restrict the darker values will create too much interest to the shadow areas and the viewer will be tempted to look at them instead.

People are used to looking for information in the lighter

areas, not the shadows, and you should emphasise this effect in your drawing. By making the shadows sink and the lights pop out, it will extend the contrast and make your drawing appear much punchier.

Working in a similar way, it is now time to introduce your third value and so on, always keeping in mind that each next value should be lighter than the previous one. Ensure that every value is the correct shape and size too. As you progress, aim to get more and more specific with both the shadow and halftone shapes.

When all the main values are on the paper, we can afford to start looking at some reflected lights in the shadows. Make sure these are very subtle and never let them fight for attention with the lighter planes of the cast. They should be only hinted at. The viewer's brain will make up the rest.



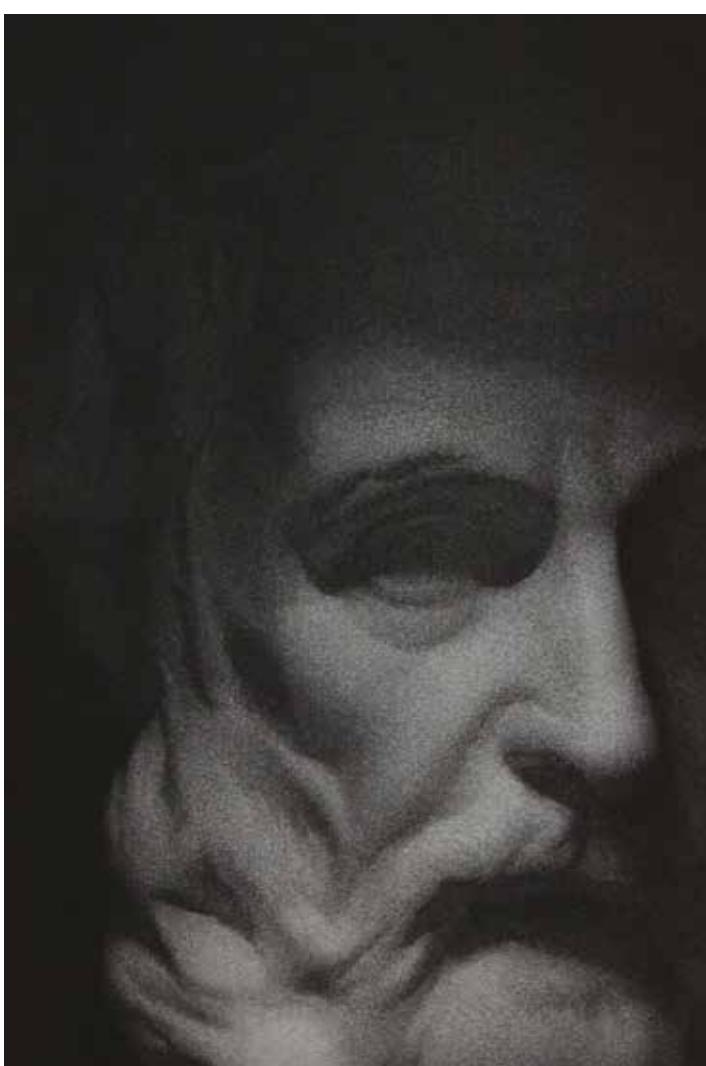
## 5 EDGES

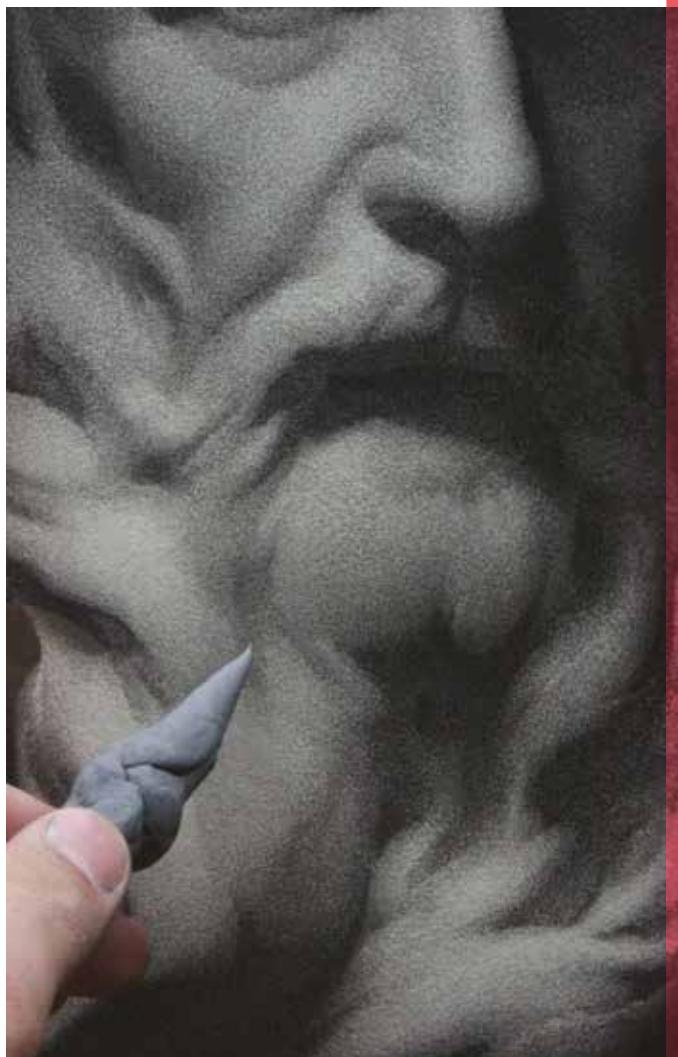
Following the introduction of several areas of different values, you are now ready to introduce variety to the edges. Experienced artists tend to do this right from the start, but for the less confident it can be overwhelming to control so many elements at the same time and I suggest this gradual approach.

Edges represent how quickly a form turns from light into shadow. Soft edges suggest rounder forms that turn quite slowly, while hard edges indicate forms that turn more abruptly – like the

edge of a cube, for example. The most extreme form of soft edges are 'lost' ones, which occur where a form or shape is so soft that it basically almost dissolves into another form or shape.

In much the same way that we used a key to establish correct values, we can also key our edges. Find the sharpest edge on the cast and draw it. Next, find the best example of a lost edge and draw that too. You now know that every other edge on the drawing is going to fall between those two in terms of how hard or soft they are.





### 6 RENDERING

This is an aspect of drawing that is most appealing to the new students. A lot of people assume that rendering is what makes a drawing seem 3D and 'real'. In fact, the way an image is rendered can only provide for a certain look and is mainly a matter of taste. The way an artist renders an image develops naturally with practice. As long you are able to get all the information you need on the paper, the way you render it is of little importance to the believability of your drawing. Some artists prefer smooth and tight rendering, while others like to give a looser, more dynamic quality to their works. Remember that there is no right and wrong. Rembrandt, for example, began his career with tighter rendered drawings, but does that make his later, looser work more or less realistic? Of course not.

Tighter, more detailed drawings are more common in atelier-style schools – this is not an aesthetic that is forced on students, but simply a chance to learn the methods

and train your hand and eye. As you progress, you can then choose where to use that skill in order to accentuate and bring focus to your pictures.

For the best results, keep your charcoal sharp at all times and be sure to hold it the right way: always at the end of the stick to allow for a light touch and subtle marks, never like you would a pen when writing.

When drawing on Roma paper, you may notice a lot of texture showing through your marks. Try and minimise that effect as much as possible by holding back from pressing down too hard with the charcoal when you want to achieve a darker value.

Try instead to build up to your chosen value by placing layers of lighter charcoal marks on top of one another. This allows the charcoal to actually work its way inside the texture or 'tooth' of the paper, thus making it less visible. If you still see some undesired texture, fill in any lighter bits with the tip of the charcoal stick and gently erase any darker marks with a putty rubber rolled into a point.

## AS LONG AS YOU CAN GET ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED ON THE PAPER, THE WAY YOU RENDER THE IMAGE IS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE

### 7 FINISHING TOUCHES

With the drawing almost complete, it is time to step back and look for any unresolved parts of the drawing that can be fixed. Be harsh with yourself at this point – you will have spent a fair bit of time and energy on this exercise, so make sure you see it through.

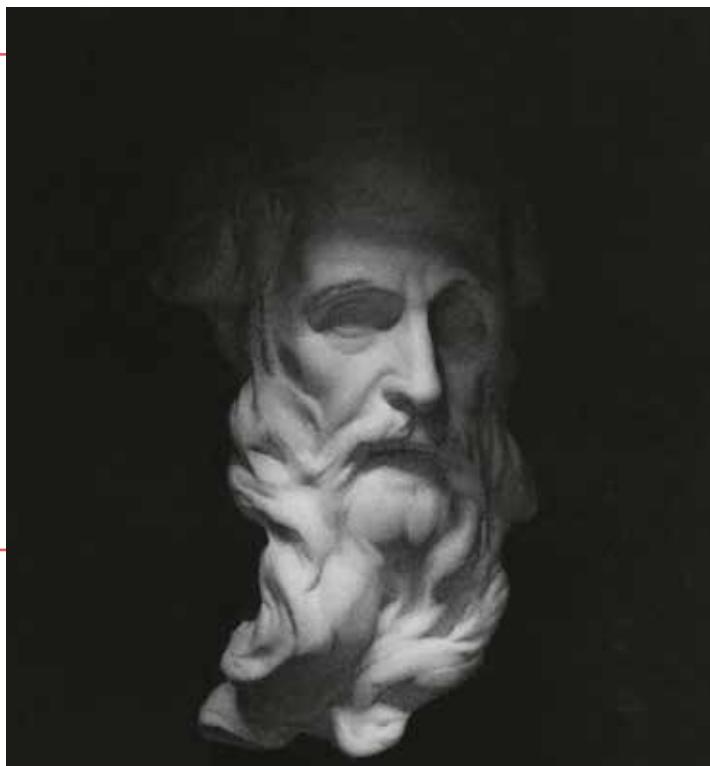
Have a close look at your edges again, making sure you haven't left any extremely sharp ones visible. Sharp edges are

almost non-existent in nature and will inevitably flatten your image and make it look less convincing.

Clean up any overly-textured areas and get rid of any unwanted lines too. Check your value relationships again. Spend time just looking at your finished drawing, trying to track down any errors you might have missed. If everything seems fine and true to nature, then your cast drawing is complete.

Next month: Radoslav tackles the added challenges of drawing on toned paper. Radoslav teaches on the Saturday School at London

Atelier of Representational Art. The next session begins on 9 January. To book your place, visit [www.drawpaintsculpt.com](http://www.drawpaintsculpt.com)





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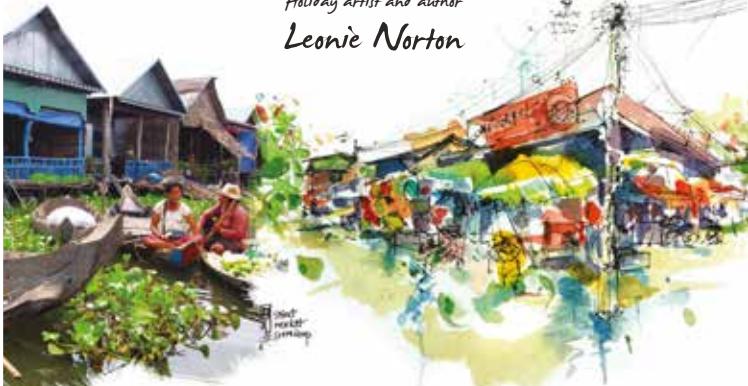
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DEMONSTRATION

# Showy LANDSCAPES

WHEN IS SNOW NOT WHITE? WHEN YOU'RE AN ARTIST! **ROB DUDLEY** SHOWS HOW YOU CAN EXPLOIT UNEXPECTED PARTS OF YOUR PALETTE WHEN PAINTING WINTER SCENES

**S**now rarely seems to fall and settle in the part of Devon in which I live and paint. When it does, I will always drop what I'm doing in the studio and take the opportunity to paint it, as was the case when I drove up onto Dartmoor last year.

With the overcast sky, the scene that presented itself to me on that particular day was a rather flatly-lit, uninspiring landscape with little contrast. Just as I began to think that the day might be a disappointment, the clouds parted and the moor was flooded with light. The contrast increased, the shadows added foreground interest and the snow-covered fields stood out starkly in the distance. It was time to make some quick pencil sketches and carefully considered colour notes, before returning to the studio.

For some artists, the depiction of snow in watercolour means leaving the white paper unpainted. However, the colour of snow is not simply 'white' and requires subtle handling with a range of colours for maximum effect. Snow often reflects the colours in the sky and the wonderful blues in the cast shadows deserve close inspection. Indeed, when I paint snow-covered landscapes I am always surprised at how little paper is left unpainted.

**1** Stretch a sheet of watercolour paper on a board. With a 2B pencil, draw up the key elements of the landscape. Reserve the lightest areas of the snow with masking fluid. Apply this with a fine nylon brush or a small pointed colour shaper. Remember that the marks left by the masking fluid on its removal are white marks that you will work with, so carefully consider its application and role within the design of the painting at this stage. Allow to dry completely.

**2** Dampen the sky area with clean water. Hold the board at an angle of about 20 degrees and use a large brush (size 10 or 12) to drop in a mixture of French Ultramarine and Permanent Rose to the left, then move across the paper adding some Raw Sienna and finally Winsor Blue Green Shade, for the brightest part of the sky to the right. Let the colours mix to create soft, 'lost' edges. This will create a contrast to the sharper, found edges in much of the landscape. When the sky area is dry, begin to add some loose, distant landscape details with mixtures of the colours used in the sky with the addition of Sap Green and Neutral Tint for the furthest hills. Note how a dry brushstroke has been used to allow the white of the paper to show through indicating snow.

Original photo



## ROB'S MATERIALS

- French Ultramarine, Permanent Rose, Raw Sienna, Burnt Sienna, Sap Green, Winsor Blue Green Shade, Neutral Tint and Transparent Oxide Brown, all artists' quality watercolours, various brands
- Permanent White Winsor & Newton Designers Gouache
- A pointed colour shaper or fine nylon brush
- Sable brushes, sizes 6, 10 and 12; rigger brush, size 2
- A sheet of Bockingford 300gsm NOT watercolour paper
- A 2B pencil
- Masking fluid
- Kitchen roll



**3** Hold the paper flat. With a mix of French Ultramarine, Permanent Rose and Winsor Blue, paint the shadow cast by the wall. Pay particular attention to the right-hand edge: the shadows must sit 'flat' upon the plane of the field, describing the angle at which the land lies. The chosen mix will granulate and add texture to the snow. Within the shadowed area add stronger mixes of blues and purples to add interest.

**4** The dark granite wall provides essential contrast in the mostly-light painting. Paint it with variegated mixes of French Ultramarine and Burnt Sienna or French Ultramarine and Transparent Oxide Brown. Create texture by flicking darker mixes onto the stones as they dry, but avoid doing so where it recedes into the middle ground as this will distract attention.

**5** With a well-pointed size 6 sable brush, begin to add structure and detail to the distant hills. Use mixtures of French Ultramarine with Transparent Oxide Brown, Raw Sienna with Burnt Sienna, and Sap Green

with French Ultramarine to paint in the trees and bushes. Keep the brush quite dry and add some texture to the area above the main wall. Be careful not to make the tones of the distant features too strong. Pick out some of the nooks and crannies in the wall with French Ultramarine and Neutral Tint.

**6** Remove the masking fluid. With the same mixture of French Ultramarine and Permanent Rose used for the wall shadow, paint in the snow on the wall tops, leaving a few unpainted patches for brightly lit areas. Pay close attention to the rounded, shadowy edges of the snow to indicate its depth. The posts are a mixture of French Ultramarine and Transparent Oxide Brown as are the twigs and grass stalks that push through the snow. With a damp brush soften some of the sharp-edged shadowed areas. Finally, add some white gouache to the sides and tops of the posts and add some indication of wire with a size 2 rigger and a fairly dry mix of Burnt Sienna and French Ultramarine.

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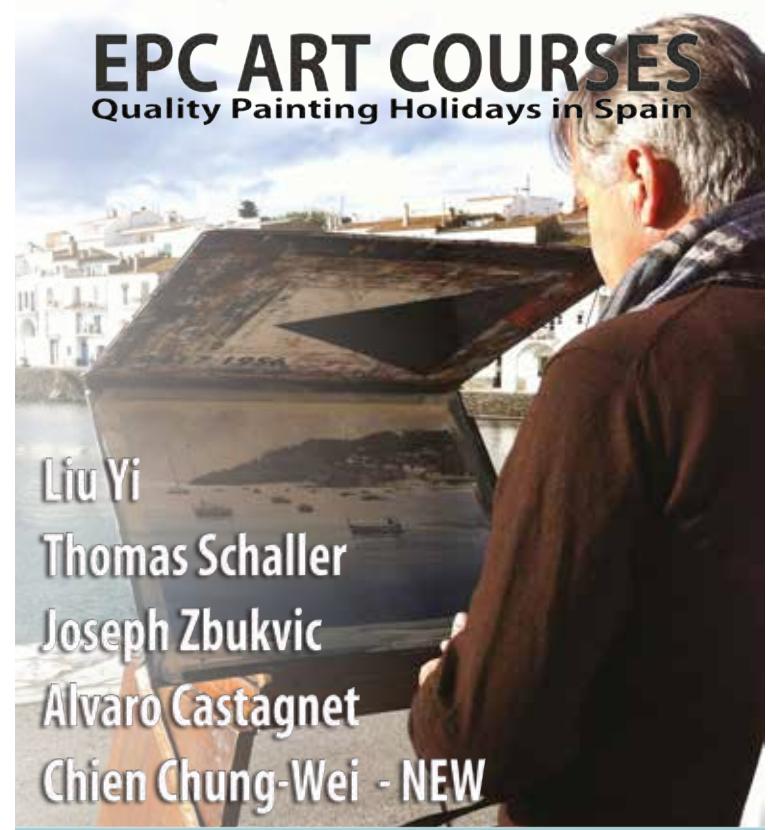
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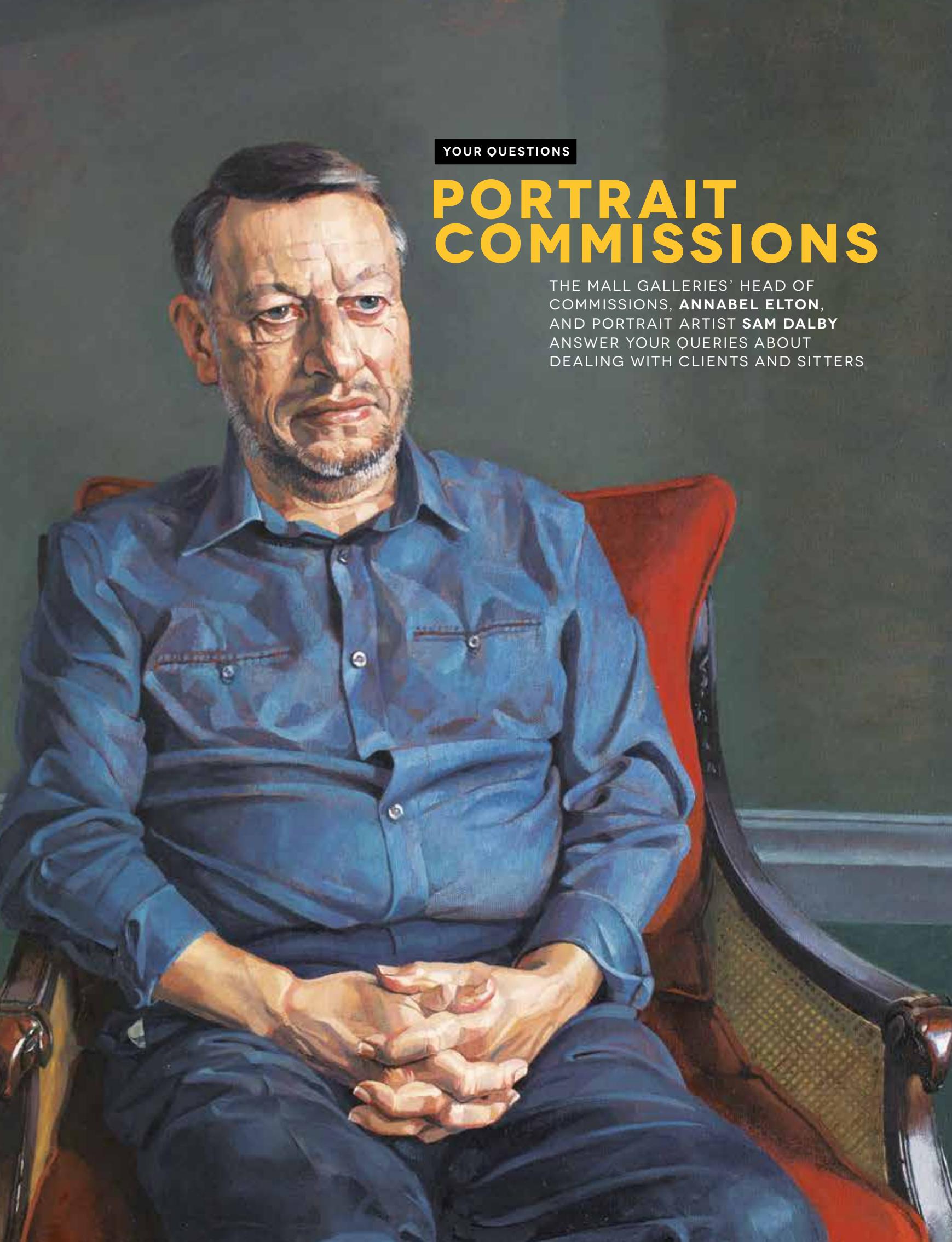
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YOUR QUESTIONS

# PORTRAIT COMMISSIONS

THE MALL GALLERIES' HEAD OF COMMISSIONS, **ANNABEL ELTON**, AND PORTRAIT ARTIST **SAM DALBY** ANSWER YOUR QUERIES ABOUT DEALING WITH CLIENTS AND SITTERS

## YOUR QUESTIONS

### What are the benefits of accepting a commission?

**Annabel:** Commissioning is a chance for inspiration, for growth and for income. If you like to work collaboratively, commissions can be a deeply rewarding process too.

Some artists like their work to be truly collaborative throughout, whereas others reveal their work only once it is finished. There is no right or wrong way, but you do need to work out where you are on that scale and set some up-front ground rules on the level of engagement accordingly.

I have worked with clients who would like to commission art for more than 30 years. In all those decades, I can count the commissions that did not work out well on the fingers of one hand so, if you are thinking of undertaking commissioned work, be encouraged!

### How can I advertise my availability to accept commissions?

**Annabel:** When setting out to find commissions, the most effective way to communicate is through your website, providing it is up-to-date and looks attractive. A website is passive, however, so you will need to use other channels – such as social media – to drive people to your website. Exhibition catalogues, postcards and any other points of contact you have with the public are also opportunities to spread the word.

**Sam:** After I graduated in 1997, I started to paint a small selection of portraits of local people with a view to holding an exhibition of the work later. At the start of the project I got an article in the local newspaper with a photo, a small interview, and a request for sitters. The portraits were not very good, and the larger project never took off, but it was the first time people started to approach me for portraits.

### Once I accept a commission, what is the next stage?

**Annabel:** Before you begin the painting, the parameters of the commission and a pricing outline need to be agreed with your patron. Size and medium are usually the easy part and can be established by email. The subject matter and its treatment are more subtle, so this is best done face-to-face if possible.

For a portrait, you will need to have discussed what the sitter is to wear and the environment in which they will be set. Because the language people use to describe art is not well developed, it can be difficult to communicate a concept. I find that sketches are a good way to ensure that the ideas in your patron's mind are close to those in yours.

**Sam:** I always start with preliminary drawings as a way for me to gauge the sitter, for the sitter to understand what I'm trying to do, and obviously for me to collect clean and precise material with which to start building the portrait.

### I'm unsure how to price a commissioned artwork.

#### What advice can you give me?

**Annabel:** A commissioned work normally costs about the same as a work sold through a gallery. As an emerging artist, remember that each happy patron and work hung on a wall is an advertisement for you, so it is best not to overprice. There are usually two elements to the pricing: your fee and expenses. Framing, delivery, travel and accommodation are usually itemised separately at cost.

### In your experience, what is the biggest source of problems or grief that occurs during the commission process?

**Sam:** The main problems I've encountered come from the client having different expectations to the artist. The best way to get around this is to make sure that you know exactly what the client wants and expects, and that they understand what you are likely to produce. If you take the time to establish a clear understanding at the outset, the process becomes much easier.

Many artists take a deposit before starting work, partly to make sure that their patron is serious and partly for cash-flow reasons. Others prefer not to be tied so that either party can walk away from the commission if needed. Three staged payments can be made for larger works, but a single final payment on completion is more normal.

**Sam:** Don't fix prices as commissions vary according to scale, complexity of subject matter and how many sittings can be provided. Each of my commissions is tailored to best suit the clients and my own ambitions for the work. I usually end up doing more work than I'm being paid for.

### Should I draw up a contract?

**Sam:** I do sometimes. It depends on several factors, including how well I know the sitter, who has commissioned the portrait and the complexity of the commission. A good contract should stipulate the full value of the work, what is to be included in the price (number of sittings, whether or not the painting is to be framed, travel and accommodation costs), the stages at which payment will be made, what happens if the customer is not happy, and how many sittings for remedial work are included in the price.

**Annabel:** Contracts are very useful for agreeing expectations and preventing problems due to misunderstandings. However, at the end of the day, it is a good relationship with the client that will really prevent this.

### What is a reasonable timescale for a completed portrait?

**Annabel:** Broadly speaking for portraits from life, six to 10 sittings of between 90 minutes and two hours is normal. If you use photography you are likely to need fewer sittings.

**Sam:** I normally ask for an initial two days worth of sitting for the preliminary drawings, which I then take back into the studio to compose, transfer to canvas, and underpaint. I then ask for a further four days of sittings to complete the painting from the sitter.

If it's a straightforward commission, it might take three or four months from first approach to completion, but it could be six months or longer. So much can complicate the process that I have learned not to give sitters promises about timings that I can't deliver.

### What sort of environment am I expected to provide?

**Annabel:** Sittings can take place either in the studio or at the client's location. It is wise to employ basic safety precautions for lone-workers, such as letting somebody

RIGHT Sam Dalby,  
Justin Eckersley,  
oil on canvas,  
90x70cm  
PAGE 73 Sam Dalby,  
Paul Kelly, oil on  
canvas, 70x60cm





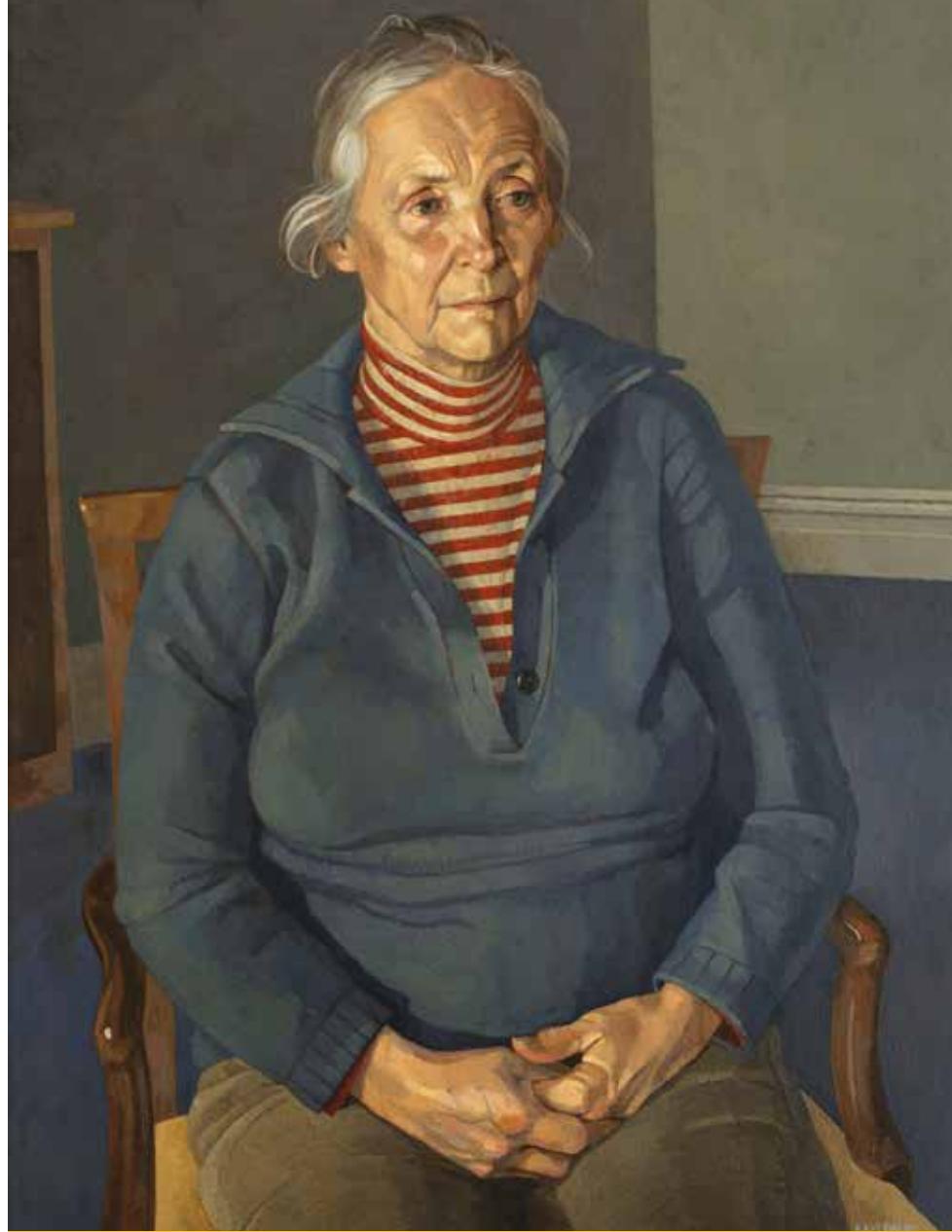
know where you are going, whom you are with and when you are expected to return. During the sitting you might like to play music or a story tape if you do not like to talk too much while working. Television will keep a sitter still but their facial expression may glaze over.

**Sam:** I have a large comfortable studio at home, so sitters can be warm, fed, and watered. I like to have a bit of quiet music in the background to take away awkward silences, and to give the sitter something less distracting to listen to than the sound of me breathing through my nose. I am completely led by the sitter when it comes to conversation, it is more important to me that the sitter is at ease.

**Should I let the client see the painting as it progresses?**

**Sam:** I do share my progress, but I only invite client input at certain stages of the process. After the drawings have been completed, I let them review what has been prepared and have a say. As I am drawing and painting from life, the sitter has a long time to get used to the painting. The client will then get a chance to have proper input once the portrait is finished, at which point, negotiations start.

**Annabel:** Once the work is finished, it can be useful to manage expectations by showing the client a digital photo of the image for approval before delivering the work. Commissioners sometimes think that they would like to tweak their portrait when they first see it. This is perfectly normal and should be explained to the client before the moment of revelation. I would recommend persuading the sitter to live with the work for six weeks before undertaking substantial changes because the sitter will not be able to see the work objectively and, worse, may actually be asking you to do something which would not improve the work. It really takes a good five years to see truly objectively but



**What level of client input and revisions are acceptable?**

**Annabel:** Artists are usually keen to please their clients and are prepared to comply with changes as far as possible without compromising the work in order to do this. It is important however to retain a balance. Not all requests are reasonable on the one hand, and yet word of mouth from a happy client is the best and cheapest form of advertisement on the other!

six weeks can take the commissioner past the first stage of seeing themselves or their loved one differently.

**Do I retain the copyright of a commissioned portrait? Or can the client use the image for his or her own purposes?**

**Annabel:** It is important to discuss intellectual property early in the process. Many people are not aware that copyright belongs to the artist unless it, or part of it, is assigned to another person. This means that your client can't reproduce their work without your permission. Commercial reproduction of the portrait would rightly carry a fee, but you may wish to encourage other forms of reproduction because it is likely to be in your interest if your client were to put your work up on their Facebook page or create personal Christmas cards using the image. [www.samdalby.co.uk](http://www.samdalby.co.uk), [www.mallgalleries.org.uk/commission-art](http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk/commission-art)

ABOVE Sam Dalby,  
*Eliza Dear*, oil on  
canvas, 78x57cm  
TOP LEFT Sam  
Dalby, *Martin*,  
charcoal on paper,  
30x20cm

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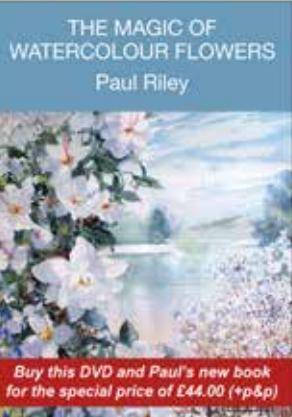
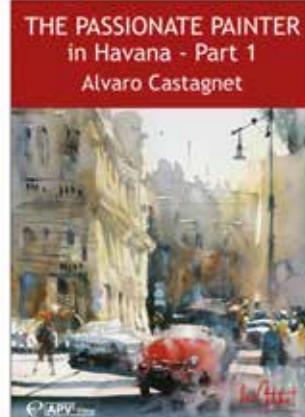
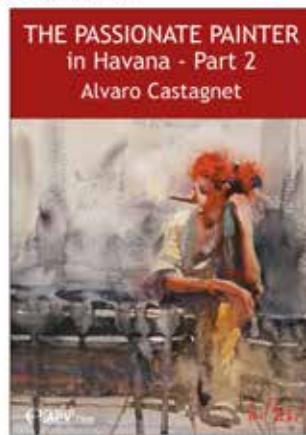
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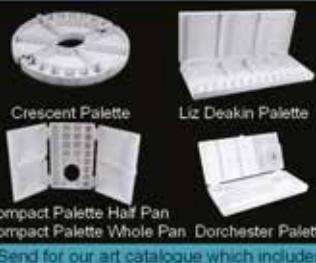
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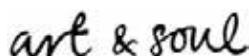


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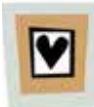
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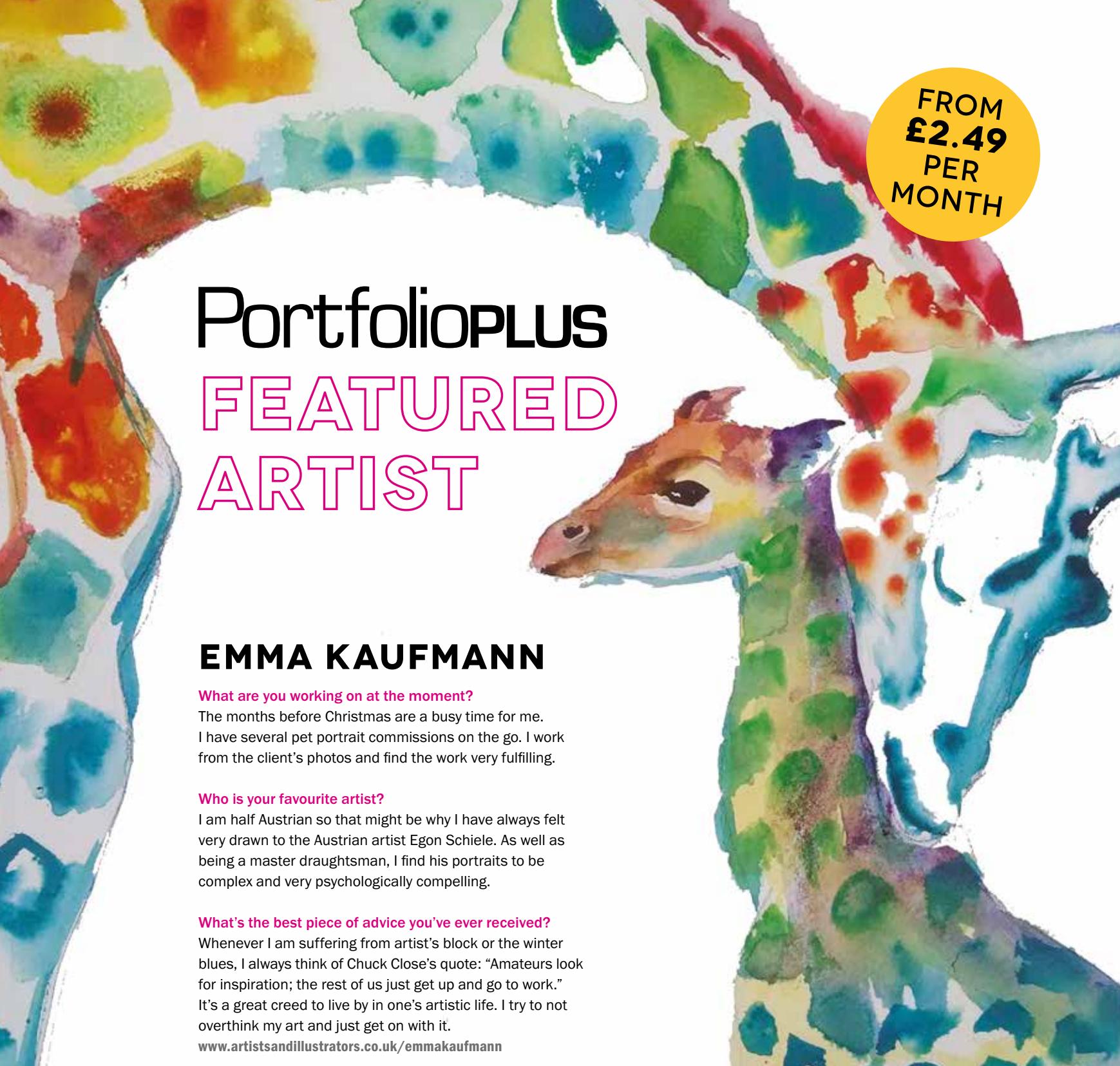
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## FEATURED ARTIST

### EMMA KAUFMANN

**What are you working on at the moment?**

The months before Christmas are a busy time for me. I have several pet portrait commissions on the go. I work from the client's photos and find the work very fulfilling.

**Who is your favourite artist?**

I am half Austrian so that might be why I have always felt very drawn to the Austrian artist Egon Schiele. As well as being a master draughtsman, I find his portraits to be complex and very psychologically compelling.

**What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?**

Whenever I am suffering from artist's block or the winter blues, I always think of Chuck Close's quote: "Amateurs look for inspiration; the rest of us just get up and go to work." It's a great creed to live by in one's artistic life. I try to not overthink my art and just get on with it.

[www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/emmakaufmann](http://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/emmakaufmann)

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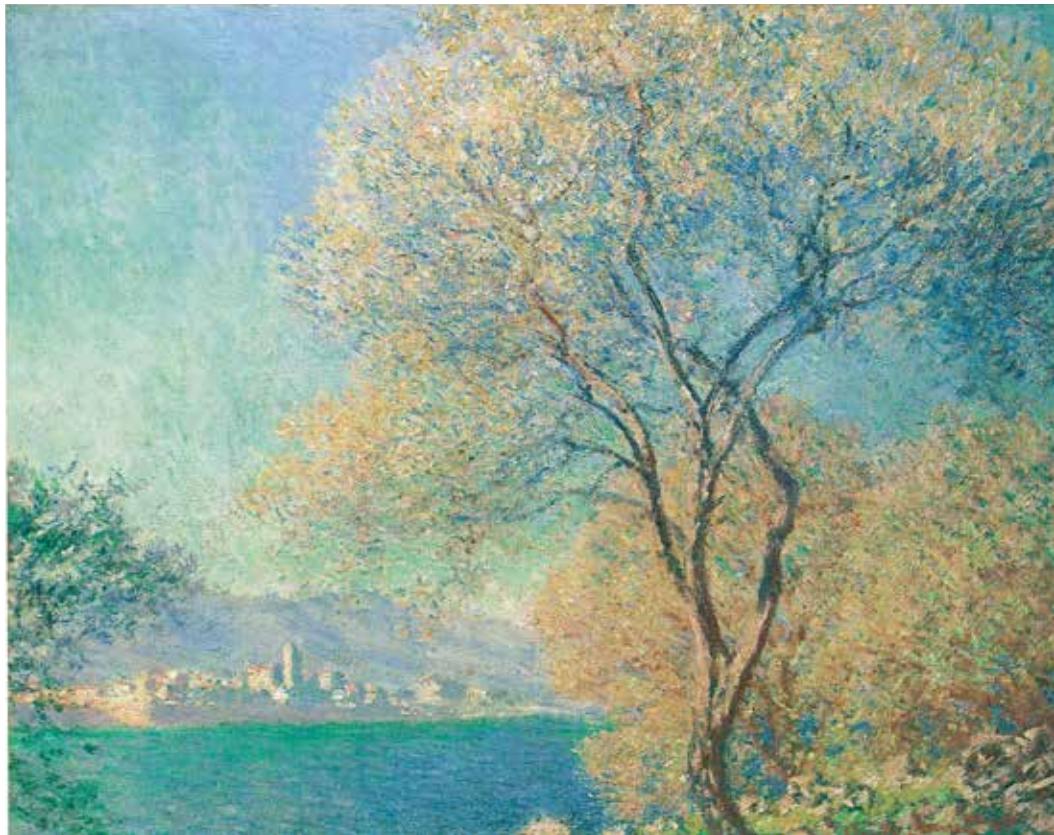
# CLAUDE MONET

RALPH SKEA REVEALS FIVE FACTS ABOUT THE FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST'S TECHNIQUES

1

## HE DIDN'T LIKE TO SKETCH

"While Monet is renowned for his oil paintings, he also created a number of highly 'finished' drawings and pastels. But as the artist tended to paint directly onto his canvases, sketching his compositions using thin paint, preparatory pencil sketches are comparatively rare. However, a few can be found in his small sketchbooks, as part of the Monet archive held by the Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris."



2

## HE RESPONDED QUICKLY TO HIS SURROUNDINGS

"By painting outdoors in all weathers and during different times of day, Monet was able to perceive the subtle qualities of light in his surroundings.

"Like his fellow Impressionists, Monet was not studio-bound and sought to respond directly to his motifs in a spontaneous manner. His success in achieving this related to his sophisticated, impressionistic technique of painting: employing swift brushstrokes, avoiding hard outlines and juxtaposing pure colours rather than blending pigments."

RIGHT Antibes Seen from the Salis, 1888, 73.3x92cm  
BELOW Poplars on the Banks of the Epte, 1891, 88.3x92.7cm.  
Both paintings: Claude Monet, oil on canvas

3

## HIS PALETTE WAS SEASONAL

"Complementary colour combinations were often used to emphasise the particular seasonal qualities of light. For example, in summer months he loved to paint dark green fields interspersed with the complementary red of poppies. In his winter landscapes, muted tones of grey, blue, and pink were used to convey mist and frost."

4

## HE CONTRASTED COLOURS TO ADD MOVEMENT

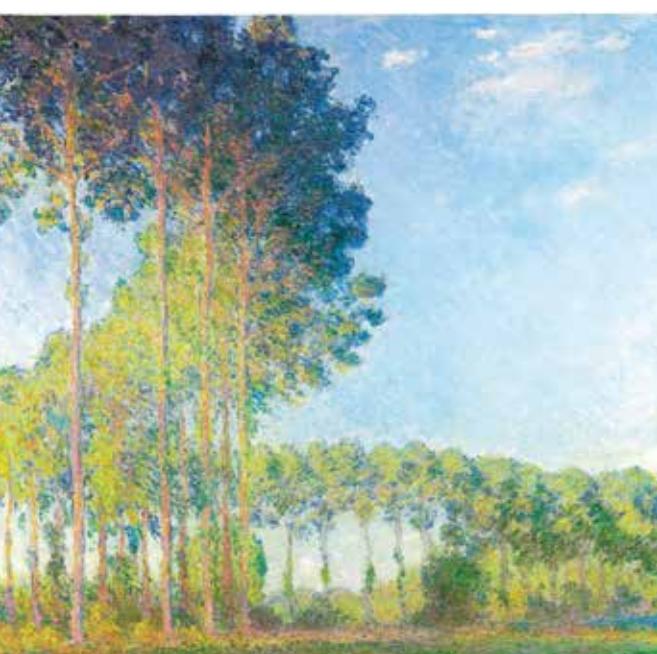
"In many of Monet's landscape paintings, foliage, rivers and reflections seem to shimmer in the sunlight and gentle breezes, giving these canvases an almost kinetic effect. He achieved his sparkling surfaces by the use of very small brushstrokes of complementary colours. By grouping these hues in pairs – red with green, blue with orange, yellow with violet – he was able to enhance the luminosity of his compositions, especially in his riverbank scenes."

5

## HE USED A BOAT TO FIND NEW VIEWS

"Inspired by the French painter Charles-François Daubigny, Monet's own floating studio was essentially a rowing boat adapted to include a storage cabin for his painting equipment. Yet this idiosyncratic craft enabled the artist, free from the constraints of a land-based vantage point, to paint unusual panoramas of the rivers and their tree-lined banks. Some of his most mysterious river scenes were painted in the early mornings when the riverside trees were beginning to emerge from the mists."

Ralph's latest book, *Monet's Trees*, is published by Thames & Hudson, £12.95. [www.thamesandhudson.com](http://www.thamesandhudson.com)





Student, Michael Coombes

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